LETTERS
ON
CHURCH MATTERS.

By D. L. L.

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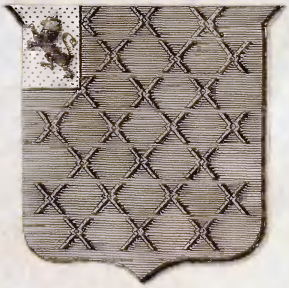

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LETTERS

ON

CHURCH MATTERS.

BY

D. C. L.

REPRINTED FROM THE "MORNING CHRONICLE."

VOL. I.

"The world is nat'rally averse
To all the truth it sees or hears;
But swallows nonsense, and a lie,
With greediness and gluttony."

LONDON:
JAMES RIDGWAY, PICCADILLY.
1851.

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LETTERS

ON

CHURCH MATTERS.

I.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL AND SCOTCH EPISCOPACY.

Nov. 25, 1850.

In Lord John Russell's sufficiently notorious letter to the Bishop of Durham upon the new Papal hierarchy occurs the following passage:—"It is impossible to confound the recent measures of the Pope with the division of Scotland into dioceses by the Episcopal Church, or the arrangement of districts in England by the Wesleyan Conference." The first question which most readers of the letter have probably asked themselves is, Why should Lord John have broken the flow of his argument by an abrupt ejaculation about matters which, so far from confounding them with the Pope's measures, we had not so much as thought about? The answer to this is not quite so obvious, but it is very undeniable. *Qui s'excuse s'accuse.* The "recent measures of the Pope" are so easily, viewed politically, to be confounded with at least the division of Scotland, as to be absolutely and entirely parallel with it, and accordingly Lord John's historical knowledge made him uneasy, and led him to blurt out what is, in point of fact, a refutation of his whole letter.

In proving this, I shall, it seems to me, be doing good service to the Church and hierarchy of England. The first requisite

to fight a good battle is to take up a good position. We have, in the present instance, our choice between the political and the ecclesiastical battle-field. We had, then, best learn, as soon as possible, that the former is untenable, that we may concentrate our forces upon the latter.

To begin with what everybody knows, the Established Church of Scotland repudiates prelacy—that of England, in its theory (however much this feeling has fallen into abeyance as a popular tenet), holds it essential to a properly constituted church. As, therefore, there are Dissenting congregations in England, rejoicing in the bland eloquence of Dr. Cumming and others, which are in communion with, and in some sort form a portion of, the Establishment of Scotland; so, in the latter country, there are Dissenting congregations in communion with, and forming part of the whole of the Church of England, under the governance of certain officers, on whom their flocks have bestowed *territorial* titles —Bishops of St. Andrews, Glasgow, Moray, &c.—the designations under which the old bishops of the days in which Episcopacy was established across the Tweed were recognised as high state officers.

You will, in this slight introductory statement, see sufficient reason why this state of things might not unnaturally be confounded with that recently introduced into England by the officiousness of Pio Nono; but when I shall go on to show you, first, that this episcopal body is the remnant of an old establishment; secondly, that its ancient territorial hierarchy fell into desuetude after it ceased to be established; thirdly, that it was for some time governed by bishops, without territorial titles; fourthly, that these bishops, *proprio motu*, in the teeth of the State, re-assumed territorial designations; that at length they were recognised by the Parliament of England, but not under their territorial designations; and, finally, that the English bishops, here acting in their spiritual, and not in their political capacity, do, for all that, treat them as territorial bishops possessing the same authority over districts in Scotland ("governing" them, to borrow a phrase from Cardinal Wiseman), which they themselves possess over the districts into which ecclesiastical England is divided, I think you must acknowledge that the confusion is on the side of Lord John Russell, and that the theory of episcopacy, as held and acted on by our bishops, makes the present question one of ecclesiastical precedent and canon law, and not one of the Queen's supremacy.

I need not recapitulate the ups and downs of episcopacy

in Scotland, from the Reformation till 1688. It is sufficient to say that William III. found an established church in that country, governed by territorial bishops. He made them an offer, through one of their body (Bishop Rose, of Edinburgh), who had come up to London, that if they would recognise his right to the throne, he would maintain the Episcopal Church as the Establishment. Their reply was that their consciences prevented them from violating the oath of allegiance they had taken to James II., and accordingly the present established Kirk of Scotland was installed in the temporalities of the Church. Those, however, to whom the episcopacy was a dogma of faith, of course ignored this arrangement—as those to whom the Papacy was a dogma of faith ignored the English Reformation,—and formed themselves into a dissenting body under the pastoral care of the deprived bishops. Episcopacy being the principle of life of this body, it of course filled up the thinning ranks of the old bishops by new consecrations. For some time these new bishops were simply given the ecclesiastical office of a bishop, without any definite diocese being allotted to them. At last the old bishops had all died off in the early part of the last century, and the Episcopal Church of Scotland was left governed by what called itself "the College of Bishops," who conjointly exercised an episcopacy, by plurality of vote, over the whole body. This epoch was, *mutatis mutandis*, very parallel to that of the government of the English Roman Catholics by vicars-apostolic. At length, as in the one body so in the other, there arose a party who clamoured for a distinct territorial episcopacy, as the only complete and satisfactory form of episcopal government. It seems, by the revelations which have of late come to light, that this very natural ebullition of national feeling among the English Roman Catholics was at first cold-shouldered by the vicars-apostolic, who preferred their condition of dependency on Rome. So in Scotland, the territorial party was opposed by a clique among the bishops, known as the College party, who fought for the retention of that temporary and unsatisfactory development of the hierarchy, from the feeling that this organization would render them more dependent upon St. Germains than the territorial one. They, in short, were Erastianising Establishmentarians upon the Jacobite hypothesis; their opponents, the party who were anxious for the security of spiritual liberty. At length, the latter party prevailed; and the Scotch bishops, at that time a sect barely tolerated by the State, reassumed, deep in the first half of the last century, the ancient territorial designations of the

old Scottish Episcopal Church, before and since the Reformation. In a few years came the Rebellion of 1745, and the Episcopalians showed themselves, for the most part, adherents of the old family; and their scanty toleration was changed into active persecution, by an Act of Parliament, in which that august body, of whose 528 members in the Lower House, 513 were at that time, by law, in the communion of the Church of England—decided that to celebrate the service of that Church of England across the Tweed to more than three persons, should be penal—punishable, if I remember right, by transportation. In the face of this legislation, the territorial episcopate in Scotland transmitted itself till more tolerant days came. Successive Acts of Parliament gave it more and more of State recognition, the last of which was the 3rd and 4th of Victoria, chap. 33, in which its prelates are described as "exercising episcopal functions within some district or place in Scotland." Such is the legal authorization and style of seven clergymen, who govern about a hundred scattered congregations in Presbyterian Scotland, and who are universally known in society, addressed and treated as, and sign themselves by the imposing mediæval titles of, Bishop of Aberdeen, Bishop of Edinburgh, Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway, Bishop of St. Andrews, Dunkeld, and Dumblane, Bishop of Brechin, Bishop of Moray and Ross, Bishop of Argyle and the Isles. Nay, more, the Bishops of the United Church of England and Ireland, who as Peers of Parliament are only cognizant of them as above quoted, as spiritual fathers, addressed them by their assumed appellations, and deal with them as filling within Scotland the same religious position which they themselves occupy in England. Not many years since a refractory clergyman, of English ordination, but settled in Scotland, gave his bishop considerable trouble. The late Archbishop of Canterbury was appealed to, and he, the Peer of Parliament who had brought in what became by royal assent the 3rd and 4th Victoria, chap. 33, in his reply, lays down that English Episcopal clergymen, if they settle in Scotland, are bound, in conscience, to give the territorial bishop, under whom they may place themselves, that same obedience which, while in England, the law would have compelled them to render to their territorial bishop here—he being a bishop appointed by the Queen, "the fountain of honour"—those of Scotland leaders of a dissenting sect, elected by that sect, and self-appointed to their dioceses.

I need not, sir, trespass longer upon your columns. I

have, I think, sufficiently shown that Lord John Russell's repudiation of the Scotch parallel is nugatory, and I have also shown that our bishops, in making (as they have made within the last fortnight) the invasion of the Queen's prerogative their chief argument against this aggression of the Church of Rome, have relied upon the weakest part of their case. They have a legitimate arena all their own—the spiritual rights they have acquired over their dioceses. Let them boldly entrench themselves there. I do not think that the polemics of the Flaminian Gate will easily carry their bulwarks, and the generous spirit of Churchmen will back them up. But let them continue to rely upon the clap-trap cry of the invasion of the Queen's prerogative, and they will in the end be acknowledged, I fear, to be neither very consistent logicians, nor very courageous chief pastors of the flock.

II.

HIGH CHURCHMEN AND THE ROYAL SUPREMACY.

DEC. 9, 1850.

VARIOUS have been the stratagems adopted by the partisans of Lord John Russell to convert the anti-Papal excitement of the day to a little private advantage, by the ignominious expedient of turning the popular indignation against a party in the Church, which happens not to be generally understood, and which the Premier therefore thinks he can readily crush, and so gain a cheap popularity with the rest of the world, who may not have taken the trouble to ascertain what the real opinions of that party are. Amongst these stratagems, none has been more openly practised, and none has proved more generally successful, than the attempt to prove that they are enemies to the Queen's prerogative, and desirous of denying her right to be "Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor in these her realms and all other her dominions and countries, over all persons in all causes, as well ecclesiastical as temporal." History shows us how very touchy the English people are when they think the honour of their Sovereign is assailed, and opponents have never scrupled to ventilate this charge against any party which they may desire to crush. To go no further back than the present century—the suspicion of disaffection attaching to the principal partisans of the two causes was one very great reason which so long postponed the two necessary measures of Roman

Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform, and it is still, though somewhat rusty and not a little blunt in the edge, the favourite weapon for one of your morning contemporaries to brandish about. Your columns, an honourable contrast, are willing to take an impartial view of the present conjunction of affairs, ecclesiastically as well as politically, and I therefore venture confidently to intrude upon you with some arguments to show that this charge is not merely incorrect, but absolutely contrary to the fact, and that, if rightly understood, the "High Church" theory of the Royal supremacy in matters ecclesiastical is the only one which can hold good, and therefore the only one which the Sovereign can hope to preserve in these times.

The Royal Supremacy is thus succinctly laid down in the 37th Article:—

"Where we attribute to the King's Majesty the chief government, by which titles we understand the minds of some slanderous folks to be offended, we give not to our princes the ministering of God's Word, or of the Sacraments, the which thing the injunctions also lately set forth by Elizabeth our Queen do most plainly testify; but that only prerogative, which we see to have been given always to all godly princes in Holy Scriptures, by God himself,—that is, that they should rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil doers."

This definition of the supremacy is the law, both secular and ecclesiastical, for it is the law of the Thirty-nine Articles, which are in force as well by act of Convocation as by act of Parliament. Were there any ambiguity in its expressions, this would be entirely removed by the first and second Canons of 1603, likewise the joint act of Church and State:—

". . . . The King's power within his realms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and all other his dominions and countries, is the highest power under God, to whom all men, as well inhabitants as born within the same, do, by God's laws, owe most loyalty and obedience, afore and above all other powers and potentates on the earth.

"Whosoever shall hereafter affirm that the King's Majesty hath not the same authority in causes ecclesiastical that the godly kings had amongst the Jews, and Christian emperors of the primitive Church, or impeach any part of his regal supremacy in the said causes restored to the Crown, and by the laws of this realm therein established, let him be excommunicated *ipso facto*, and not restored, but only by the Archbishop, after his repentance, and public revocation of those his wicked errors."

This, sir, is my case, as it is the case of Lord John Russell. You will see that in it are established these points —that the Sovereign has not the ministering of God's Word,

nor of the Sacraments, but that he or she possesses that only prerogative which we see to have been given to all godly princes in Holy Scripture by God himself, to godly kings among the Jews, and to Christian emperors of the primitive Church—that of ruling all estates or degrees, ecclesiastical or temporal, and of restraining with the civil sword all stubborn and evil doers.

When these definitions were framed, the law of England was only cognizant of one religion as a State possibility. To be an English subject was to be a member of the Church of England. Our courts only took notice of "malignant Popish recusants" and of "nonconformists," as of the subjects for fine and imprisonment, as of human bodies upon which were to be put in force the tortures of the rack and the gibbet, the thumbscrew and the stake—heads whose ears were to be cropped off, trunks that were to be disembowelled. Accordingly there would be no ambiguity as to what the Supremacy meant—it must have been a supremacy over the Church of England, and that alone. It would have been absurd to have guarded people against the notion that the Monarch laid any claim to minister sacraments, the ministration of which was a capital offence; and there could be no doubt that, among the stubborn and evil doers whom the civil sword was called in to restrain, were included all who did not conform to the Church of England.

But time has developed, happily, a wiser and more merciful state of things. Instead of hunting Dissenters and Roman Catholics for torture and death, the Queen's courts hold out to them the same equal protection of life and limb which they do to all other loyal subjects, and exercise an equal tutelage over their property, whether private or devoted to the support of their different religious opinions. The civil sword (to apply the phrase to the coercive jurisdiction of civil as well as of criminal courts), which is held out to protect the religious endowments of Nonconformists, is the same which protects those of Churchmen—just as that denial of the Sovereign's right to minister God's Word and the Sacraments, which is the essence of nonconformity, is, by solemn act of Church and State, guaranteed to the Churchman.

How, then, does the "High Churchman," and how does Lord John Russell, apply the statements of the Articles and of the Canons to existing circumstances? The former endeavours to do so upon the principle of fair play. He asserts that, as all religious denominations, if sincere, must hold their form of faith most dear to them, so the limitation which

is imposed upon the Sovereign not to interfere with the ministration of God's Word and the Sacraments among them must be equal and stringent for all (with of course the self-evident exception of such sects as may violate primary laws of morality or natural religion in their tenets). So, on the other hand, all denominations have an equal claim upon the Sovereign, as the fountain of justice, to see that right is done to them within their respective limits—that is, to see that their own recognised governing powers impartially act up to their own by-laws in carrying out the polity necessary to the sustentation of the corporate character of the particular denomination. To the Royal Supremacy, so understood, the High Churchman is willing to bow implicitly. It appears to him a thing tolerant, wise, and plainly needful to sustain the framework of society, and he conceives that, in vindicating it for all denominations in common with his own, he is doing them a service, and has the right to claim that they shall aid in establishing it for him. He denies the right of his Sovereign to interfere with the primary doctrines of his creed —so he denies that the Queen has the power to tamper with the provisions of that confession which is so sacred to the Presbyterian. He claims that she shall not contravene the old canonical process of confirming bishops of the Church of England—so he claims that she shall not attempt to force the Wesleyans to elect their president in any way contrary to the constitution. He claims, moreover, alike for those who deny that the bishop was rightly confirmed or the president rightly elected according to their respective by-laws, a fair hearing in the courts of Westminster, and, if successful, a *mandamus* that right be done in virtue of that same supremacy over all men in all causes, as well ecclesiastical as temporal, in the one case as the other, which is our gracious Sovereign's birthright. As sternly does he deny that the Queen, or the Courts of Westminster, or a committee in Downing Street, can tamper with the doctrine of the Church of England, or of the Wesleyan Connexion, or fairly proceed with the final adjudication of the case, if it prove to be one not of the party impugned, till this point shall have been cleared up elsewhere.

Now, sir, how does Lord John Russell deal with the same question? We have not, that I am aware of, any essay of his upon the subject; but in his case the old proverb—*deeds, not words*—comes in very opportunely. With regard to Churchmen, he interprets the supremacy as it affects the ministering of God's Word and the Sacraments, by making

a Cabinet question of the rejection of a bill brought in this year by the Bishop of London, which provided that in any case where the doctrine of the Church of England was affected, the court of appeal should be her bishops, and not a committee of lay judges, of whom the majority need not be members of the Church of England—this bill being professedly grounded on the dissatisfaction raised by a recent judgment of that committee, which had handled the doctrine of one of the Sacraments contrary to the formal judgment of the Metropolitan's Court, and in a way repugnant to the known opinions of most of the Bench of Bishops. This was one of Lord John Russell's *deeds*. Another of older date, but not forgotten, was, allowing the Queen's mandate to go forth for the consecration of a bishop of whose orthodoxy there were such grave suspicions, that his University had put him under a severe and lasting stigma for printed statements—whose election by the chapter was doubtful, and at whose confirmation an opposition according to all the forms of law had been made. Lord John Russell has not hitherto had the opportunity of showing by his deeds whether he interprets the supremacy as vigorously in the case of dissenters. If he does so, it requires no prophet to foresee a disturbance; if he does not, it noway demands a philosopher to say that his ideas of equity are peculiar.

Such, sir, is the common-sense explanation of that "High-Church" (as it is called) theory of the Supremacy, which has been the butt of so much ill-natured and ignorant comment of late. Such is implied, and no more, in a paper which certain clergymen put forth not long ago. Whether that paper were as clear as it might have been, I do not pretend to say; whether the phrase "temporal accidents of spiritual things," about which so many brainless criticisms have been concocted, carries with it its own meaning to readers not conversant with the precise language of the schools, I do not claim to decide; but that the meaning of the document was what I have endeavoured to draw out, I fearlessly assert. And I go on to assert likewise, that those who hold the Supremacy so defined, are her Majesty's most truly loyal subjects, and the best upholders of her prerogative; claiming, as they do for her, that Ecclesiastical Supremacy which extends over all denominations of her subjects alike, and which is such that common sense and common convenience will confirm it to her; while that, on the other hand, of Lord John Russell's assertion, is one which can only apply to the members of the Church of England, and is so intolerable in

its application to them that it is impossible that it can long endure. The first is the living reality of the free constitution headed by a Sovereign of the House of Hanover in the nineteenth century, and the other the impossible reminiscence of the State domineered over by a Tudor monarch of the sixteenth.

III.

LORD ASHLEY AND HIS MEETING.

DEC. 10, 1850.

IN your leading article of last Friday, you ably expose the fallacy contained in that sentence of Lord Ashley's speech in which his lordship announces his preference to "worship with Lydia on the banks of the river side, rather than with hundreds of surpliced priests in the temple of St. Barnabas;" implying, as it did imply, taken with its context, that the said hundreds of priests, real or imaginary, were to be turned out upon the banks of the river side, and not the imaginative orator. This sentence was clearly considered as the gem of the meeting, for we learn from the report that, "at the close of this sentence, which the noble lord had to repeat, the whole meeting simultaneously rose and testified their satisfaction by loud and most prolonged cheering." One almost regrets to spoil the after-taste of such a satisfaction, but truth and grammar must be heard, even above the double recitation of a well-concocted flourish and the din of "loud and most prolonged cheering." Lord Ashley's magnanimous resolve was simply a piece of sonorous nonsense, founded upon ignorance of that Greek original which I hope it is not Popery to prefer to the authorised version. The noble orator read in the latter that St. Paul worshipped with Lydia by a river side, "where prayer was wont to be made," and his imagination at once pictured to him the spectacle of something like what we never see in these days, except at a Primitive Methodist revival—and with a very safe forethought he closed with this, rather than with the worship of the church or "temple" of St. Barnabas. You must permit me to assert that his lordship cannot have read, or, if he has read, must have forgotten, what St. Luke really wrote, which was, οὗ ἐνομίζετο προσεύχη εἶναι,—"where there was a customary *proseuche*," that is to say, *a house or station of prayer*, in other words, an *oratory*—the acknowledged meaning of the term *proseuché*; so that, instead

of having bound himself to turn out upon the river's bank where he listed, his lordship only asserted his preference for frequenting some stated house of prayer by the water side, which might be less gorgeous than St. Barnabas, and might be more so.

So much for Lord Ashley's Greek, and his success in making an antithesis. Still, that he would not be seen within "the temple of St. Barnabas," even to save a Sunday's afternoon by the side of the Thames, I am perfectly willing to believe.

Once, and only once in my life, I happened to go to church at the Chapel Royal, St. James's. The worship conducted at this chapel you probably know. There is an altar, upon which are placed, with other plate, two huge silver candlesticks, and the chanting is performed by surpliced priests, surpliced "gentlemen," and a set of boys, who wear not merely the surplice, but coats of scarlet and gold. Once, I say, and only once, was I present at this service. It was on a Sunday afternoon, rather late in the summer, and, besides the surpliced officiators, not a dozen people were present. Amongst this scanty congregation, just opposite to me, stood Lord Ashley. Whether or not the noble lord is in the habit of deserting his parish church for the Chapel Royal, I have no means of ascertaining. All I can say is, that having once been at that chapel, and having on that occasion seen Lord Ashley there, his lordship is, in my mind, indelibly mixed up with the ceremonial of the Chapel Royal.

I should be very glad to see a request made to Lord Ashley to explain the subtle lines of demarcation existing in his mind, which can, on the one hand, lead him to reject his own parish church for the Chapel Royal, with its silver candlesticks, its chanting, and its surpliced priests and choirmen, and boys in surplices, with gold and red, moreover; and, on the other hand, induce him to prefer the Thames banks to worshipping in "the temple of St. Barnabas."

In short, sir, to any person even moderately acquainted with Church history, allusions like the one to worshipping with Lydia on the bank of the river side, when employed as against the theory of ceremonial worship, are absolutely worth nothing. Rightly or wrongly (as the case may be in the eyes of Lord Ashley and Mr. Bevan), the early Christian Church always inclined to ceremonial whenever it could. In the earliest days of its existence, when the assemblies of the faithful had to be held by stealth, in fear of their lives, it was, of course, plainly impossible to carry out this to much extent; but, with

the very first blush of quiet times, the natural tendency of the religious mind to honour God with the best of worldly things, broke out. The prelude to the terrible persecution of Diocletian was characteristic. At Nicomedia, the then seat of the government of the Roman, as London is of the British Empire, was a church, like "the temple of St. Barnabas," richly adorned, and these adornments, like those of "the temple," were the voluntary offerings of the pious. As in London, so in Nicomedia, intimation was given from governmental quarters that the Christians were no longer to follow their own tastes in their own churches; and as in London, so in Nicomedia, a mob was easily found to carry out the hint. In the latter case, the populace was more scientifically disciplined, and more really in earnest, and the police more subservient, and accordingly the church was sacked; a more business-like way, I cheerfully acknowledge, of carrying a point than convoking a public meeting.

In truth, Lord Ashley and his colleagues have had the boldness, or the blindness, to embark upon a crusade, the extent of which, if they mean effectually to cover their ground, is little appreciated by any of the possessors of those lungs which so turbulently welcomed the idea of the noble lord worshipping upon the bank of the river side, at the risk of all the disturbance which the method no less than the matter of their interposition will occasion. They may put down this tendency or the other to ceremonial worship in the Church of England; but it will require nothing less than a a revolution to eradicate the principle, and to prevent a recurrence of what they are pleased to call a grievance in that community. In any religious body like the Established, or the Free Kirk of Scotland, or the Congregationalists in England, where the worship consists merely of an extempore prayer and a sermon—both of them the literary effort of the same man—and of a hymn sent out from the united mouths of several hundred worshippers, ceremonialism is not an essential, though even there we find it creeping out from all sorts of unexpected corners. But, with a worship like that of the Church of England, so eminently varied in its contexture—with its confession made by the united congregation, its absolution pronounced by "the priest alone," its cheerful invitation to united psalmody, its recurring course of psalms, its readings of Holy Scriptures, intercalated with a prose hymn—one of the noblest of uninspired productions; its united profession of the "Catholic faith;" its sentences where minister, bidden to uprise, and people reciprocate pious

ejaculation; its longer collects, each acknowledged by the assent of the congregation; its anthem "in choirs and places where they sing;" its alternating litany; its communion service, referring to the previous worship, and perforce performed elsewhere—that elsewhere "the Lord's table"—ceremonialism is absolutely inextinguishable. It is of the essence of the whole affair; and if ceremonialism is inextinguishable, so, as a *sequitur*, is a considerable amount of gorgeousness in it. The natural tendency of refined human nature is towards beauty of form, of colour, and of sound. The very face of the world, its mountains, its varied flowers, its song of birds, teaches this; and wherever some gloomy fanaticism does not warp this natural tendency, we find it to be a first impulse of piety to offer something of all this beauty, which it prizes so much, to the worship of its great and beneficent Creator, whose gift, in truth, it is: and most especially do we observe this tendency in religions whose worship is formally ceremonial.

Happily, then, the Church of England possesses and prizes ceremonialism and beauty of worship, in spite of my Lord Ashley. The overburdensomeness of the ante-Reformational worship might not unnaturally have led, at the recoil of the great change of the sixteenth century, to its being cast away. But it was otherwise, though not without an undercurrent of Lauries at all times, one of whom—by name Patch, and by profession fool to Queen Elizabeth—broke the "superstitious" fittings of her private chapels, at the instigation of some great folks of the same way of thinking—no wiser man, so history relates, having been found who would undertake the work.

Lord Ashley and his friends proclaimed themselves lay members of the Church of England, and not of the Presbyterian or Independent body; so, of course they must abjure the doings of the Roundheads, and hail with satisfaction the restitution of that Church in 1660. I appeal to their candour, and not to their cheers, if the immediate result of that restitution (which had so soon a terrible call to show its practical bearings in the rebuilding, after the Great Fire, of nearly all the churches of the City) was not towards gorgeousness of external religion. To take but one instance. When the Cathedral of St. Paul's had to be rebuilt, of all conceivable places of worship in the world the one which was adopted to serve as its model, and to be the object of its emulation, was "The Temple" of St. Peter's at Rome. Accordingly the church was reared, with its lofty vaults, its Litany desk, its eagle from which the lessons are so ceremoniously read, and

its numerous stalls rich with Gibbon's carvings to serve as the receptacle of all those hundreds of surpliced priests who have from that day to this continued to chant ("mutter," according to the infallible Lord John) the service. We have even heard that the dangerously Papistical clergyman, who is at present dean of that cathedral, dreams of the abominations of painted glass and painted walls.

To give only one more instance from London. There stands on Cornhill a church called St. Peter's, rebuilt after the Fire, and containing what, it seems, is an especial object of aversion to Lord Ashley's friends—a high chancel screen. The consecration sermon of this church was preached by the famous Bishop Beveridge, who absolutely referred with peculiar satisfaction to this especial fitting, expressing "wonder why it was not observed in all other churches besides this," as having been "the practice of the Universal Church" "for thirteen or fourteen hundred years."

It is true that during the last century the performance of religious worship had degenerated too generally into a cold and slovenly monotony; but this was the result of the general decay of religious zeal. This, in time, revived; at first, I am glad to own, from the exertions of truly pious and religious men, whose dwarfed successors and representatives are the party that appeared at Freemasons' Hall on Thursday last. A disciple of these now rules, as Metropolitan, the Indian Church, and he has in his city of Calcutta carried through the building of a cathedral—of whose consecration he has himself written the account, from which I send you some extracts:—

"The beautiful picture of the Crucifixion rising above them in the great eastern window; the holy table, with her Majesty's superb service of communion plate; the stalls for the clergy on the south and north sides of the choir.

"In a moment the organ burst forth, and the procession began. Forty clergy were present, and twenty divinity students.

"At the offertory nearly 2,000 rupees were collected.

"The Holy Communion then commenced. The clergy kneeling round the sacred table, all in their surplices, as in cathedrals at home, was a most touching scene."

Supposing Lord Ashley, by some change of politics, to find himself Governor-General of India, would he be prepared to worship by the banks of the river side of the Hoogley, rather than with all the surpliced priests he might find in "the temple" reared by Bishop Daniel Wilson?

One more remark, and then I will conclude. Mr. Bennett, in the postscript of his letter to Lord John Russell, has inserted

a communication conveying the somewhat startling fact that the recently reformed "evangelic" liturgy of Prussia orders a crucifix, lighted candles, and the sign of the cross as requisites for the Sunday service. Mr. Bennett omitted to remind his noble correspondent and parishioner, that the prime adviser in this reformed liturgy is by common consent allowed to have been a gentleman well known in England, little suspected of Papistical or "Tractarian" leanings—the fellow-worker of Lord Ashley himself in their joint darling scheme of the Jerusalem bishopric—the Chevalier Bunsen!

IV.

NATIONAL CLUB.

DEC. 14, 1850.

THEIR juxtaposition, in Lord John Russell's famous letter, has given a sort of currency to the junction of the adjectives "insolent and insidious," quite independent of the proceeding of which they were originally predicated. They could not help dancing before my eyes while I perused a document recently put forth by a body which calls itself the National Club. This august society has its habitation in a house in Old Palace-yard. It has not yet aspired to rear itself a palace of its own, and we are not aware of M. Soyer ever having been solicited to preside over its kitchen; but, to compensate, the National Club has a knack of writing and publishing quite unknown to its gorgeous but silent rivals.

The churchwardens of England have either by this time received, or will, I understand, all receive, from this dignified body, a pastoral letter, accompanied by a note also in print, in which, with admirable modesty, "the committee" requests "immediate consideration" to its *brochure*, and a conference with the leading laymen of the parish. It assumes that the receiver can have but one opinion about carrying out the ukase, which it playfully terms "Suggestions," and, in conclusion, opines that he will "perhaps be good enough to communicate as early as possible with the committee." The whole is given under the hand of Mr. W. H. Bellamy, their secretary. There is no doubt a very obvious motive in all this —that of getting the enclosed paper read from curiosity, if from nothing else, to see who this Mr. Bellamy can be who writes so authoritatively, and under what character he insti-

tutes his Visitation, whether as Archdeacon, Special Commissioner, or Cardinal Archbishop.

The document itself is a pamphlet of seven pages, headed, with all the ingenuity of Roman and of Gothic letters, "Suggestions offered to the Lay Members of the Church of England on the best Mode of putting a stop to Romanizing practices within the Church, by the Committee of the National Club," —and is composed of a short manifesto, bearing the signature of the Duke of Manchester, as President of the Club; and, supplementary to this, a report, addressed to His Grace, by Mr. J. C. Colquhoun, in the name of some sub-committee of the Club.

You will see what a daring position is taken up. A voluntary body of little notoriety and little weight assumes the fact of injurious practices in the Church, and sows broad-cast suggestions—not to persons in authority—not to the clergy—not to the Legislature—but to all the laity, to put a stop to them. A proceeding in its essence so democratic, a policy so daring ought in its details to bear the impress of extreme moderation and caution, and it ought, above all things, to make good its grounds of accusation before putting in operation so terrible an engine as the laity of all classes, stirred up by invective and unguided by information. Let us see how far the Duke of Manchester and Mr. Colquhoun are mindful of this primary law of morals.

His Grace, assuming with the dignity of his station in state and club the whole subject-matter, passed on, with a watered recapitulation of its practical portion, to the report; and in that report we find the catalogue of grievances which has called for the hyper-metropolitan interference of Mr. Bellamy, unblushingly summed in statements, every one of which I declare to be either devoid of foundation or so coloured as to be worse than mere invention. After some prefatory matter, the document gives it as the sub-committee's opinion, that "the characteristic of the Church of England" is that "it embraces persons of various shades of theological opinion," and "presents a platform, ample as God's word, on which Calvinist and Arminian, High Church and Low Church, alike may stand." In the same breath it goes on to give its own interpretation of this tolerant definition by branding "*a large party*" standing on that platform with "being permitted to retain its benefices, while they abandon its doctrines"—that is, with straying beyond the platform which is capacious enough to hold in comfort Calvin and Arminius; and yet, for mercenary motives, claiming to share advantages reserved to

that standing ground. This party is next charged with keeping their places within the Church of England, "while in heart and sentiment they have seceded to the Church of Rome." "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," said a higher authority than the National Club. How, then, does that body justify this monstrous charge, involving, as it does, imputations of false doctrine, deceit, and sordid motives, which it dares to disseminate through England to breed suspicion in every parish? "Their proceedings may be briefly described;" that is to say, we will make our accusations, and shirk the proofs on the score of brevity. "In the formalities of their worship — in the decorations of their churches — in the gestures and observances of their ministers, they copy the practices and ritual of Rome." The letter of mine, to which you gave insertion on Tuesday, is, I conceive, an implicit reply to this charge. The worship of the Church of England is, as I have there shown, essentially a ceremonial one; and, following the laws of ceremonial worship in every religion, is one admitting of, and naturally running into, external splendour. Further, which I did not state there, it must never be forgotten that our Reformers did not spin a new Prayer Book out of their own heads. They took the old English Prayer Books, Breviary, and Missal. They retrenched what they thought superstitious, or superfluous, or burdensome, and they explained the law of these changes in their prefatory matter. They then published the Prayer Book in that compendious form which requires other help than what is definitely laid down in the Rubric, to put the literal carrying out of that rubric into working order. This authority, to which we are to look for this help, is mainly to be found in the rubric which comes immediately before "the Order of Morning Prayer." "And here it is to be noted that such ornaments of the church and of the ministers thereof, at all times of their ministration, shall be retained, and be in use, as they were in the Church of England, by the authority of Parliament, in the second year of the reign of King Edward VI."

This rubric is, I believe, little read, and less understood. "The temple of St. Barnabas" is a great advance towards compliance with it—but it is not compliance. Will Lord Ashley, Sir Edward Parry, and the Popes of the National Club believe me when I tell them that the ornaments of the minister herein ordered, as specifically as anything else is ordered, are not merely the surplice, but, at the time of Holy Communion, the cope or else the vestment—that is, the

chasuble, the dress in which the Roman Catholic priest says mass. This "large party," anxious as it is for the sake of duty to obey the rubric literally, has yet abstained from doing so in this case, from a dread of scandalising their congregations by such a change, the reasons for which they might not be able to apprehend. I do not blame them for this inconsistency, for inconsistency it is upon their professed principles. On the contrary, I think it shows a prudent and a forbearing spirit; but when I see men, who, for the sake of conciliation, have so sedulously abstained from the strict compliance with their strict code of by-laws, thus accused of copying the practices and ritual of Rome, the time has come to speak out and dare their accusers to the proof. We have seen that the English Prayer Book is an abridgment of the ante-Reformational ones (speaking generally); one proof of which is, that those Sunday Collects which I doubt not Lord Ashley piously and gratefully makes use of whenever he attends church, are translations, with very few exceptions, from the Collects of the *Sarum Missal*. The selection, too, of the epistles and gospels comes from the same source, and so on for many other portions of our services. It has so happened that, contemporaneously with the stricter observance of the rubric, has arisen a general taste for Gothic architecture, the solid proof of which is the New Palace of Westminster; and so all classes, Low Church and High Church, and Romanists also, not to add various sects of Dissenters, have been for some years past copying the architecture of those Gothic churches which our ancestors bequeathed to us. This is now tortured by men who have themselves given into the taste, into a charge of Romanising. The Book of Common Prayer is, we all know, statute law, by the Act of Uniformity of Charles II., as it is Church law by the Act of Convocation; and I apprehend any clergyman might be put into court for not wearing at the time of Holy Communion his cope or vestment. Is this what Mr. Colquhoun points at, when, later in his report, he lays down as one of the alternative remedies for his pet grievance, an appeal to the authorities to carry out the rubric and the penalties for its transgression?

I called your attention in my last letter to those observances which are in force in the "Evangelic" (such is the present legal designation of the Prussian Establishment) "Church" in Prussia—not merely lighted candles, but a crucifix, which the "large party" has never thought of setting up in our churches, although there was one in Queen

Elizabeth's Chapel till destroyed by Patch. Supposing the National Club to appeal to the Prussian Consistory to abate this Romanising ritualism, what do you suppose the answer would be?—I opine—Mind your own business, and let us follow our own ritual. Such, I trust, will be the answer of the Church of England to this meddlesome interference. We follow our rubric because it is our rubric, without questioning whether this rite or that rite may, or may not, be also found at Rome, just as we maintain the titles of archbishop and bishop, and dean and chapter, and canon and archdeacon, all of them also existing in the Roman Church, and we do the one with as clear a conscience as the other—*Honi soit qui mal y pense*.

But these misrepresentations, gross and unfounded as they are, are nothing to what follows:—"They" (the "large party") "avow its leading doctrines"—those of Rome, that is —"that tradition is of equal authority with Scripture; that the commands of the Church are to be taken as the commands of God; that God's Word is not to be studied as the sole rule of our faith, but that the priest's word must be taken by all as the guide of their conduct." What the "large party" does hold I will endeavour to draw out in the words of the formularies of the Church of England. They hold that they must be visibly members of the Church of God, and they find this visible Church thus defined in the nineteenth Article —"The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." Holding this *ex animo*, they turn themselves to find out what those things are which are of necessity requisite to the due administration of the Sacraments according to the Church of England's rule and practice. With regard to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, they find out that one thing is of *rigorous necessity*—namely, that the administrator shall be either a bishop, or a priest having received Episcopal ordination, and they find that the feeling of the Church of England is so very strong on this head that she allows bishops and priests of the Episcopal Churches of Rome and Greece, on their conforming to her and signing her Articles, to minister as bishops and priests in the Church of England—while she only admits conforming ministers of the non-Episcopal Protestant bodies, *under any circumstances*, as laymen. Hence the "large party" draw the inference that the Church of England holds what is compendiously termed

"the Apostolic Succession" to be necessary for the preservation of the due administration of that sacrament, and hence likewise holds that the "visible Church" must be composed of bodies of Christians possessing that succession. This visible Church is also called the "Catholic Church," from a word which, in Greek, (the language of the New Testament,) means *universal*. The "large party" protests strongly against Romanists calling themselves, exclusively, Catholics, and denying the title to the Church of England; and they think they have a good right to do so, as every time they repeat the Apostles' Creed they profess their belief in "the holy Catholic Church;" and every time they repeat the Nicene Creed, "in one Catholic and Apostolic Church;" and every time the Athanasian Creed comes round they are told what is "the Catholic faith." And yet people, like the National Club, twist this love for the good old word *Catholic* into an accusation of Romanising, while our thinking ourselves to be Catholics is so great a difference between us and Rome.

But there is another limitation, the preaching of the pure word of God—how is this to be ascertained? The next Article furnishes the answer to this question. "The Church" (of course that visible Church defined as it is in the last Article) "hath authority to decree rites or ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith." The interpretation of this Article is to be found in the solemn acceptance by Convocation, in Queen Elizabeth's time, of the first four General Councils as truly such. Therefore all Episcopal bodies cut off by them (there are several of such bodies in the East) *from* the visible Church *by* the voice of the visible Church, are, according to the Church of England, not *of* the visible Church. The case of all remaining Episcopal Churches she of course leaves to the voice of such General Council, whenever it may be obtained, as the only means of ascertaining the opinion of the visible Church—rejecting many alleged General Councils of later date, by one of which, that of Trent, she is herself asserted to be separated from the visible Church. The twentieth Article goes on to state that the visible Church has not the power "to order anything contrary to God's word written." Of course it has not; and this the "large party" vigorously assert, and they further assert that *à fortiori* no priest's word against the Word of God can be their guide of conduct, be he High Church or Low, bishop or archbishop, nor (less than the priest's word even) the word of a Prime Minister or of a club. This view of what the Church of England does hold is not a new one, excogi-

tated by the "large party," but one inherited by them, as they have proved, and are ready to prove again, when called upon in a different spirit from that of this circular, by the most eminent English divines from the Reformation to the present day.

But enough of this charge. The next one is, "that we are to carry to the priest the constant confession of our sins, seeking at his hands absolution and peace." The "large party" say nothing of enforcing constant confession, which is the practice of the Romish Church, but they do say, in the words of one of the exhortations of the Communion Service of our Church, "If there be any of you who by this means (self-examination) cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned minister of God's word, and open his grief, that by the ministry of God's holy word he may receive *the benefit of absolution,* together with ghostly counsel and advice, *to the quieting of his conscience,* and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness." It observes that the public absolutions are ordered to be pronounced by the priest alone. It also reads in the Service for the Visitation of the Sick this rubric: "Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which confession the priest shall absolve him if he humbly and heartily desire it, after this sort: 'Our Lord Jesus Christ, *who hath left power to his Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in him,* of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences; *and by his authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins,* in the name of the Father, &c. Amen.'" They likewise read in the form of "the Ordering of Priests," in the words used by the bishop in the act of ordaining—"Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands. *Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained.*"

The next clause in the report is—I am sorry to use such a phrase—a deliberate perversion of truth and reason: "that we are to draw our views of truth, not from our Scriptural articles, but from Tridentine decrees." Mr. Colquhoun, when he penned this accusation, must have known that the "large party" protests against the Tridentine decrees, and this in the strongest way, *by their whole life,* as well as their words. They continue in the Church of England, which

rejects the supremacy of the Pope, because they are fully persuaded that she is a true and living branch of the one Catholic Church; the Tridentine decrees cutting us, and all who will not own that supremacy, from the Catholic Church. In the next few words he strays into a clear and explicit statement of scriptural truth, as held by the Universal Church—"that grace is to be sought in the Church's ordinances alone, and invariably in her sacraments." While holding this, the "large party" fully believe that though God wills grace to be sought in the ordinances of His Church, yet that He mercifully accepts the intentions of those who in faith and humility seek grace from the ordinances of their communion, which they believe to be a portion of the visible Church, albeit it may not come within the definitions which they hold the visible Church itself has given of its own credentials; and they also reject the notion of a person who goes to a Church Sacrament in wilful unbelief or hardness of heart gaining benefit from it, a doctrine which they had laid down in our 29th Article.

We next find the following statement, "that the Holy Communion is a propitiatory sacrifice offered by the priest, in which Christ is really present in the elements—elements, therefore, to be adored." This is meant as a round-about-way of saying, those men believe in the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation. This the "large party" does *not* hold. It, in common with the Church of England, rejects that materialising explanation of a great mystery, but, with the Church of England, it as fearlessly holds the totally independent doctrine of a real presence.

For the proof that the Church of England holds this, they can quote from the Communion Office in prayer before the one for the consecration of the elements:—"Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear son, Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood." They can also cite from the prayer of Consecration—"Grant that we, receiving these Thy creatures of bread and wine, according to Thy son Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of His death and passion, may be partakers of His most blessed body and blood;" and further on, *at the Consecration itself*, the recitation of the words—"Take eat, this is my body which is given for you;" and "Drink ye all of this, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins." They likewise can quote that, in the distribution of the elements, the priest says, "The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, given for thee, preserve thy

body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat *this.*" What substantive is the antecedent of *this?* and so for the other element. In the Church Catechism, which I hope the members of the National Club have all learned, we find the following questions and answers :—"Q. What is the outward part or sign of the Lord's Supper?—A. Bread and wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received. Q. What is the inward part or thing signified?—A. The body and blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper. Q. What are the benefits whereof we are partakers thereby?—A. The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine." (Something, it seems to me, very like seeking grace at the Church's ordinances.) Finally, they can appeal to the 28th Article, which plainly states that the Lord's Supper is not a *sign*, but a *sacrament;* the definition of the word sacrament in the Catechism, including "an outward and visible sign," and "an inward and spiritual grace;" the description of which two component parts of this sacrament I have just quoted from the same authority. Further on, too, this same article lays down *how* the body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in that sacrament—namely "in a heavenly and spiritual manner." As for the count of the "large party" holding this sacrament to be a sacrifice, my reply is very brief. Centuries before the idea of transubstantiation had ever been ventilated, the Universal Church held and taught that that sacrament was an unbloody commemorative sacrifice. In common with the Universal Church, the Church of England believes the same; her great writers, her Andrewes and her Wilsons, for instance, proclaim it, and with them, rather than with Mr. Colquhoun and the National Club, the "large party" desires to take its stand. To this again I say, *Honi soit qui mal y pense.*

The National Club having settled the public doctrines of the Church and her teachers, now condescends to play the part of inquisitor, and to spy into the private devotions of individuals:—"That our devotions will be aided by crucifixes, by rosaries, by the invocation of the Virgin and the Saints, by manuals of Romish worship, by the records and the practices of monastic life." I have never used either crucifix or rosary, but I say, with regard to the former, that what Queen Elizabeth did in her chapel, and what the Evangelic Church of Prussia does in its public services, cannot be esteemed Popery when employed in private devotions;

and, as for the rosary, I cannot, from personal knowledge, speak to the fact of a single person using one. Perhaps some do; but is the use of a rosary inconsistent with allegiance to the Church of England? Mr. Colquhoun would, I think, find it difficult to say that it is. I do not say that using a rosary, considering the popular associations connected with it, is a very wise thing. I am inclined to think it might as well not be thought of, and I have no proof that any one has ever thought of it. But what intrinsic disloyalty to the Church of England does it imply? A rosary is commonly thought to be a string of beads intended to help the memory of a person saying his prayers. So, even if a person thought proper in his own room to allow himself the aid of this artificial memory, the National Club hold themselves justified to violate his privacy, and stir up the passions of the entire body of the Church of England against a "large party" in it. But the real meaning of a rosary is a series of prayers, and in this sense it is that a certain individual, peculiarly aimed at, has recommended it. The next accusation is a simple mis-statement of a fact which Mr. Colquhoun clearly never cared to inquire into. The "large party" never has sanctioned the invocations of the Virgin and the Saints. "Manuals of Romish worship!" What does this mean? It is true that amongst religious books lately published, some have been drawn from the publications of Continental Churches, carefully expunging all that in them militated against the Church of England. Their compilers conceived, I believe, that in so doing they were but following the precedent of the framers of the Book of Common Prayer, and doing no more than has for centuries been blamelessly done by divines of all schools. Whether all the compilations were equally successful is another point; they were each of them, I suppose, the work of some individual.

The "records of practices of monastic life"—what Mr. Colquhoun means by this is difficult to understand. Church history has been more read of late than it used to be, and the result is, that it has been found that those records were not all of them annals of vice and corruption. It was found, for instance, that the restorer of Christianity to Saxon England was the monk Augustine. These records and these practices, like all other human things, are, I believe—and I fancy the "large party" believes—a mixed tissue of good and evil. Among the latter, I do not remember that it was the practice of any monastic society to stir up popular hatred by the circulation of insidious and falsified statements.

Now comes the interpreting clause—"These views are held, some of them by all, by many altogether." This sentence, of course, furnishes a very convenient loophole to the Club to get out of its charges, when any individual proves them untrue. They will at once say, "We did not mean you."

Mr. Colquhoun dilates upon what he supposes the differences existing between different sections of the "large party," but I will not weary you with continuing the analysis. The specimen I have given is quite sufficient to show what trust can be placed in it. The report continues to propound some practical suggestions towards driving the "large party" from the platform.

After running through the ordinary catalogue of remonstrances, meetings, addresses, committees, &c., among which, by the way, is that appeal to the authorities for rubrical uniformity upon which I have remarked in the earlier part of this letter, the report concludes with sundry oracular sentences, manifesting a clear wish to expel those who differ with the National Club from the Establishment by means of the laity, as a last resource, taking the matter into its own hands, and assuming throughout that the proscribed clergy will find no laity to sympathise with them, but that the contest is one between a tyrannical sacerdotal caste and an oppressed people—a view not true and not original, for it is the identical weapon which Voltaire and the whole philosophical party in France brought, with such deadly effect, to bear upon Christianity itself.

Hitherto High Churchmen and Low Churchmen have coexisted in the bosom of the Church of England. The former party, at all events, has never thought of expelling the other, although believing that their own view of that Church was the truer one. They have used the legitimate weapon of persuasion to bring round members of the Low Church side to theirs, and with a success which may in part furnish the clue to this extraordinary document. But they have not done anything further.

Let the Low Church party assert them to be traitors to the Church of England—they will continue to assert, as calmly as before, but more loudly, that they are convinced that the truth is on their side. But let their opponents proceed from word to action—to that only form of action which can be construed to be the meaning of Lord John Russell's letter and the report of the National Club—and they will blow the flame of a fearful conflict. The issue of this conflict must be whether

the High or the Low Church party are to quit the Establishment. High Churchmen are perfectly willing, if unmolested, to continue the existing armistice, and to trust their cause to fair persuasion. But if they are attacked, they must defend themselves, and will do so to the last. They never can abandon their opinions, knowing them to be the truth which Christ bequeathed for ever to His Church. They will not leave the Establishment, whose most consistent members they claim to be, without a struggle. Of all the evils of that struggle, of all the heartburnings and family dissensions which come from it, the responsibility, now and for ever, will rest upon those who struck the first blow; it will rest upon Lord John Russell and upon the National Club.

V.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON AND MR. BENNETT.*

DEC. 16, 1850.

BY the time this appears in print, the unexpected *dénouement* of the *affaire S. Barnabé*, as the French would have called it, will have been before the public some days; and I can, therefore, in what I propose to offer, appeal, not to their first prepossessions, but to their reflection and judgment.

A saying of Talleyrand's, upon a memorable occurrence, has passed into a proverb—"It was worse than a crime, it was a mistake." Such, I believe, will be the judgment passed by most candid men, not carried away by party prepossessions, upon the Bishop of London's course in this affair. I have a deep and sincere respect for that prelate. He has for more than twenty years presided over a diocese with a population as large as that of a kingdom; and during this time his industry in multiplying churches and schools has been indefatigable, his munificence in promoting these and all other good works unbounded, and very lately he has made a noble stand for an article of the Christian faith. But no man is infallible; and in the instance which has just transpired, his lordship has shown a disregard of obvious considerations which is perfectly inexplicable.

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* This letter was written solely upon that first one of the Bishop's, which he sent with such haste to the *Times* newspaper. I have thought it better not to alter it in the reprint. It will be seen at once how little the case, even as put by the Bishop himself, tells in favour of the line which he has unfortunately taken.

In this vast diocese of his, the two parties into which the Church of England is unhappily divided have respectively their strongholds, and divide its places of worship between them according to the tenets of each incumbent. His lordship is avowedly on the High Church side, although, from the difficulties of his position, he can show to it little more than preference. Accordingly, as far as outward observance is concerned, he has been compelled to limit his general authority to certain recommendations of rubrical conformity contained in those charges which come at the long intervals of four years. These recommendations have always been of a moderate hue; but moderate as they have been, they have met with a sturdy, determined, and entirely successful opposition from the Low Church phalanx. On the High Church side, they have met as much acquiescence as the relations of the respective incumbents to their churchwardens and their vestries permitted. In many instances these relations even prevented High Churchmen from obeying their diocesan; while, on the other hand, in some localities the clergymen had sufficient influence to succeed in reviving not merely that ritualism prescribed by the Bishop, but further measures of it not enjoined by him, although approved by their consciences as equally in conformity with that letter of the law which they esteemed a safer guide than the shifting precedent of anomalous customs, varying in every parish, and not resting upon any superior authority. Among these clergymen, one of the most conspicuous was Mr. Bennett. Strongly impressed with the ceremonial character of the English ritual, and having a strong conviction of the binding force of the literal injunctions of the Rubric, he steadily carried his own principles into practice in the Church of St. Paul's, Knightsbridge. His congregation there included some of the richest and noblest in the land, and his method of conducting the service approved itself so highly to at least a considerable portion of them, that, at his invitation, they volunteered sums of money sufficient for him to build another church, schools, and a residence for himself and curates, in a distant and miserable portion of his parish, where, but for their munificence, there was no prospect that the teeming poor would have the opportunity of worshipping God, either according to the ritual of High or of Low Church. This was the well-known Church of St. Barnabas. It was built by voluntary offerings, without any appeal to public society, or any aid from public funds, for the use of a locality too poor to help itself, *and with a perfect understanding all along, from the known and published*

opinions of its founder, of the style of ritual which it would exhibit. If ever there was a thing done above ground, it was the manner in which that church came into existence; and if ever there was an instance of ritual irregularity being excusable, it was in a church so built, particularly as it was not a parish church, and nobody therefore had any legal obligation to attend it. But there is no proof that ritual irregularity took place there. There might have been things in it which the Bishop thought, to use a current phrase, "went too far;" but, as certainly, everything that he says ought to be in every church, and yet is not in so many, may be found at St. Barnabas; and what the things are to which he specifically objects have only vaguely come to light.

November, 1850, came, and with it the recurrence of the Bishop of London's charge. In this document, contrary to the precedent of his two former charges, the diocesan reproved less strongly those who fell below than those whom he held to go beyond the ritual ideal. But while in doing so he used sharp language, he avoided giving, as he had done in former cases, specific instances of what he wished to see corrected. Nothing accordingly was expected to come of it; for it was not to be supposed that any clergymen would volunteer to identify themselves as the unknown defendants, arraigned upon unknown counts. But there was another individual, whom neither Bishop nor clergymen had dreamed would ever play a part in the episcopal superintendence of London—the First Minister of the Crown; who had the audacity, by way of raising a cloud of dust to cover his retreat from a puzzling political embarrassment, to publish a letter containing what, to every one who knew anything of the Bishop of London's oft-expressed sentiments, was a palpable misrepresentation of his charge. The mob caught at this, and for several successive Sundays made the neighbourhood and the very services of St. Barnabas Church a scene of disgraceful outrage, and, but for the interposition of the law, would probably have made it a scene of pillage and bloodshed. At last the disturbance was appeased, greatly owing to Mr. Bennett's quiet courage, and, contemporaneously with its being allayed, appear a pamphlet by him smashing the Premier. All friends of order, all friends of the opinions entertained by Mr. Bennett, and all true friends of toleration, though they might not concur with his theology, were rejoiced at his exposure of what was a disgrace to our civilization.

Up to this week matters rested in this shape, when all at once we heard that Mr. Bennett had resigned his living,

and that his resignation had been accepted by the Bishop. Curiosity was on tip-toe, as well it might, to fathom this inexplicable revolution. On Thursday the narrative appeared, in the form of Mr. Bennett's letter tendering, and the Bishop's accepting that resignation. The whole matter turned out to be one respecting the ceremonial of St. Barnabas, which had appeared to the Bishop to be too "Romanising;" a word which has as magic a force in getting a man hunted down as "Frenchman" had a century back, or as "Socialist" has now.

Mr. Bennett professed himself unconvinced of this tendency to implied undutifulness to the Church of England—the gist of the imputation—but offered, towards the close of the correspondence, to retrench any ceremonial in his church which it might appear was either not in force in other churches in London with his lordship's privity, or was not in use at St. Barnabas when the Bishop consecrated it, or could not be found to be the practice of some existing English cathedral, or was not authorised by the Book of Common Prayer or the Canons of the Church. If these conditions did not satisfy his diocesan, rather than disturb the peace of the Church by compelling legal proceedings, he put the resignation of his parish, which he loved so dearly, and had worked so hard for, into the diocesan's hands at four-and-twenty hours' notice. This all occurred before the Bishop's charge, and before, therefore, the worship at St. Barnabas had been in the slightest degree molested by popular violence. This popular violence soon blazed forth, and Mr. Bennett became identified with the cause of order and decency against Lynch law. And this was the time the Bishop chose to call upon him, for the literal and rigorous fulfilment of a promise which he had given, perfectly voluntary, by a cession of guaranteed and legal rights, almost too self-renunciatory to be justifiable upon the principles of mutual defence which should govern society. This would have been a hard measure, under the circumstances, even had the Bishop been conspicuous for stringently enforcing his ritual decisions on all alike. But, so far was this from being the case, that when, in 1842, he gave some simple directions—such as using all the prayers which the Church ordered to be used every Sunday—and a body of his clergy obstinately refused to obey him, not only did he shrink from endeavouring to compel them to obedience, but almost at once knocked under. When, in 1846, he advised daily prayers, and a vast number of his clergy simply ignored the recommendation, the Bishop

did not say another word to corroborate the expression of his and the Church's known wishes.

It is no excuse to say that these gentlemen had never put their resignations into the Bishop's hands. Their not having done this makes Mr. Bennett's claim for forbearance infinitely greater. They refused to act up to their Bishop's and the Church's wishes, and dared him to force them to do so by law. Mr. Bennett, having acted up to his Bishop's wishes, did other things which his own conscience told him were right in the eyes of the Church, and he stripped himself of all his legal protection, should his Bishop feel inclined to visit this work of (in his eyes) supererogation with the extreme penalty of dismissal.

The Bishop's course has been, I repeat it, a mistake; and there seems but little prospect of its being rectified by the proceedings of the Archdeacon of London or Middlesex acting under his directions, if we are to judge from a letter of the latter dignitary which has crept into the papers, in which he announces that it is the intention of the Bishop "to direct his Archdeacons to visit all the churches and chapels in which the forms and ceremonies referred to in his late charge are persisted in," and trusts that the result of the visitation of St. Barnabas "will be satisfactory to the public." Which public? The one which was howling round and in St. Barnabas, converting the house of God into a bear garden, and endeavouring to convert it into a battle-field; or that public which was in the meanwhile striving to say their prayers quietly in the menaced church? If the Archdeacon had announced his intention of visiting *all* churches and chapels within his district, raising some and reducing others to that uniform standard which the Bishop approved—though many persons would have been greatly annoyed at what they would have found themselves compelled to do, or to leave undone, and many would have protested against his competency to make such sweeping reforms—yet all straightforward men would have acknowledged and lauded the Bishop's equity and courage. As it is, all that can accrue from this wretched spectacle of an attempt to crush the momentarily unpopular, and to leave unscathed the triumphing party, is a universal disruption of credit and respect, and everything that commands obedience—a pure and simple victory for the cause of anarchy.

VI.

THE LONDON UNION ON CHURCH MATTERS.

DEC. 17, 1850.

I LATELY ventured some remarks upon the circular of a voluntary association in London, which has been pleased to occupy itself with the present condition of Church matters. I propose to-day to handle a document which is in the course of distribution by another body in the metropolis—the London Union on Church Matters—which occupies, on the High Church side, a position somewhat analogous to that which the National Club fills in the opposite quarter, both of them being proofs of the irregular shifts to which an ill-regulated condition of affairs reduces men. You will observe, sir, that in what I said formerly, though most strongly objecting to the entire form, tone, and subject-matter of the National Club's manifesto, and the counsels insinuated in it, I in no way took exception to any body of persons existing in this land of toleration (if land of toleration it can still be called) publishing their mind in a proper, inoffensive, and unseditious manner. Such, as far as I am competent to form an opinion, seems to me to be the tone of the "Suggestions for the future proceedings of the Union and its Members," issued by the London Union on Church Matters, which has come under my notice.

You will, in the first place, observe that the document does not address itself to any but the members of the body for whom it is especially intended, although containing observations which its authors would clearly be very glad to see sink deep in the minds of all their fellow-Churchmen. In other words, it is not an agitating document. It states, as I shall show, startling truths; but it leaves those truths to produce their own effect upon independent agents. It singles none out as objects of persecution, it fixes upon no other persons to cajole into engines of that persecution, it hangs out no duke as the sign of the establishment, it sets up no Mr. Bellamy to rule the English Church; lastly, and most important, so little does it caricature the opinions of the antagonistic party, in order to render them objects of obloquy and suspicion, that it does not so much as allude to any but those two marked instances of unsound doctrine which of late have scandalized good Churchmen, and formed the topics of our courts of law. The Church of England, and that alone, as a thing whole and undivided, is the key-note of the whole production. The first sentence is so true as to be almost a truism:—

"Churchmen must unite in the defence of the Church, and their united efforts must be guided by the principles of the Church."

The committee of the "London Union," after calling upon Churchmen to consider their present position, proceeds to detail the grievances under which it considers the Church to be now labouring:—

"It is useless to rely on the State for the protection of the Church, or to look to temporal rulers for the defence of the faith.

"The legislature does not, even in theory, consist of Churchmen, and may soon cease to consist of even professing Christians.

"And yet (as the result of a long series of encroachments of the State) the temporal legislature has professed to establish the Queen in Council as the final court of appeal in matters of faith—has claimed and exercised a power which it cannot have of right, to modify or repeal canons of the Church, without reference to Church authorities—and is assuming the control of the education of Churchmen; while the Prime Minister, who is virtually nominated by the House of Commons, practically appoints to vacant bishoprics, and appoints the great majority of those who now, under temporal authority only, act as the ultimate judges of doctrine."

These are strong words, but not more strong than the occasion calls for. As I pointed out in my letter on the Royal Supremacy, the relations of Church and State have been entirely altered, and, in my opinion, improved, in a merely political sense, by the gradual admission of the principle of toleration. I say merely political, because the distribution of this toleration has not been impartial. I am not a citizen only, but also a Churchman; and so, while, as a citizen, I am most anxious to contribute my share towards raising those of my fellow-citizens whom I know to be in all the practical relations of life good, able, and upright men, although I may think them in error in their theological opinions—yet as a Churchman, and as owing a sacred duty to the opinions of the Church, I claim concurrently—not as a favour, not as a reasonable concession, but as the merest scant modicum of common honesty—that, in proportion as the State puts more and more power into the hands of those who conscientiously believe the Church of England to be in error, and who therefore conscientiously fight against her—so the Church should, in equal and concurrent measure, be given the power of defending herself against their assaults by those same spiritual means which they possess and she is deprived of. Why is the Church of England deprived of them? By virtue of that concordat with the State, the essential principle of which was exclusive toleration of the Church of England,

and persecution of all other forms of belief. Whatever different persons may think of the abstract justice of such a concordat, they cannot, if they are not wilfully blind, help acknowledging that, when the State has for her part broken it, the Church has the equitable right to demand fresh securities for that sufficient power of satisfying the consciences of her own believers, which is the natural and inalienable prerogative of all religions that claim respect on moral grounds. Instead of this, the State has absolutely retrenched the Church's covenanted powers of self-government. This position of affairs is strongly stated in the paper before me :—

"The State, in fact, gives now no preference to the Church. It professes to protect and encourage all religious bodies alike. But it is most unjust that, having thus broken the contract on which the union of the Church and State was formed, the State still holds the Church bound by ties to which she submitted only to secure that union and preference—ties, too, which, by a forced interpretation, the State has now rendered more stringent than in former times.

"Not to dwell on expressions of persons high in office which might be quoted, the above-mentioned instances, among others, show that we must not rely on the temporal powers of the State to protect the Church. And we cannot but observe, at the same time, that, by the unequal application of the principle of civil and religious liberty, all sects have been set free to attack and injure her, while she is not free to exercise, in her own defence, the rights and inherent powers which in common justice ought to have been confirmed to her by that same principle."

All other religious bodies in the country have their own legislatures, which are free to meet and to deliberate, and to pass by-laws, so long as those by-laws only affect the spiritual concerns of those who are willing to accept them, and lay down nothing inconsistent with those conditions of citizenship to which all denominations alike are bound to yield deference. The Wesleyans have their Conference, the Kirk of Scotland its General Assembly—graced by the presence of a representative of that Royalty whose interference with spiritual matters it so rigidly repudiates—and the Irish Roman Catholics were not long since startled by the tidings that a Synod was about to sit at Thurles. In theory, the Church of England also has its legislature in the Convocations of the provinces of Canterbury and York—bodies which at every fresh Parliament the Church is called upon to elect—bodies which meet every session, and every session are at once prorogued—bodies of which, at one time, we hear that they are not fit to deliberate upon the affairs of the Church of these days, because they are not reformed; and at another, that they cannot be reformed, because they have not the means of

deliberation. I again refer to the circular of the London Union on Church Matters:—

"The Synods of the Church and the Convocations of the different provinces are the constitutional means authorised and directed by the laws of the Church for such counsel and action; and the plea often alleged, that Convocation in its present form is unsuited to existing circumstances, ought not to be allowed to weigh against its revival, inasmuch as it has the power of self-reform.

"But the 'Act of Submission' having made the royal licence a necessary preliminary to the enacting of canons in Convocation, and the Crown having now for nearly a century and a half withheld that licence, since the time when Convocation was preparing to censure Bishop Hoadley, the constitutional powers of the Church have been, and are, forcibly kept in abeyance."

The writers of the document then go on to prove that the existence of such bodies as Church Unions is the necessary result of such tyrannical silencing of the legitimate means of deliberation, which were given to the Church by the most solemn of national promises, and expressly guaranteed in the royal declaration prefixed to the Thirty-nine Articles. For it must not be forgotten, as a gross aggravation of the wrongs of the Church, that, concurrently with the emancipation of those who dissented from her, her own liberties have been not merely crippled *comparatively*, by not being enlarged in conformity with the change in the constitution, but *positively and absolutely*, in the silencing of her legislature. The "London Union," in vindicating the moral rightfulness of the organization of those bodies called Church Unions, speaks very stringently as to the absolute necessity of their conforming, not merely to the spirit but to the letter of the law. Glad as one is to see them actuated by such a spirit, yet, as their constitution is not a matter so generally interesting to your readers, I refrain from making any extracts from this portion of the document.

Those lovers of ease, or followers of Lord John Russell, who may console themselves with the hope that, although Churchmen may be stirred up out of doors, yet the Houses of Parliament are the true retreats of carelessness where the charmed Lotus-eaters are ever privileged to live on in dreamy forgetfulness of the daily increasing dissatisfaction, may be a little undeceived by what follows in these suggestions:—

"The committee hope that, when so strengthened, the Union may give important help to members of either House of Parliament who desire to use their power and abilities in the defence of the Church. We need especially a strong body of sound Churchmen of all parties in Parliament,

who, while preserving perfect independence of opinion on subjects of general politics, will, notwithstanding, unite firmly to defend the Church, and to obtain for it that freedom of action which is its inherent right at all times, but which, in order to its self-defence, is essentially necessary, now that the State has made all who are separated from the Church free to prosecute their own views to its injury.

"The committee further hope that by the efforts of Churchmen thus united, the sad grievances of the Church may be presented to the Crown and the Legislature in their true aspect, by addresses and petitions, properly framed, and suggesting for consideration well-devised plans for improvement. Such plans, it is possible, may not be at first adopted, nor even favourably received; but we may have good hope that they will ultimately prevail, if wisely arranged upon right principles, and urged with steady perseverance.

"For these purposes the committee earnestly desire the co-operation and advice of those members of both Houses of Parliament who feel themselves bound in conscience to use their efforts in the Legislature for the safeguard of the Church, and for the removal of obsolete or improper restrictions upon her freedom. And they would also venture to suggest to persons who are not well acquainted with parliamentary proceedings, the necessity of patience, while our friends in the Legislature are thus exerting themselves; and of confiding to their better information and discretion, while they endeavour to obtain, by means which can be fully appreciated only by those who have studied the forms and habits of our legislative bodies, and the temper and dispositions of parties, that candid hearing and fair treatment to which the truth and justice of our cause are entitled."

The paper then continues to give some words of charitable and seasonable caution against that terrific outburst of fanatical violence which seems, for the last two months, to have absolutely bereft many of her Majesty's liege subjects of those wits of which, under ordinary circumstances, they show no lack. They characterise it as—

"An excitement which seems to have led people, for the time, to forget all our immediate and far greater perils from the State—the Court of Appeal, the uncanonical appointment of bishops, the suspension of the Church's synodical action, and the denial of an article of the creed. This strange state of the public mind, amounting to panic, is evidently inducing numbers of persons to sink all differences, however important, in the one point of hostility to Rome, and to abandon all Catholic principle for the uncatholic and destructive profession of a 'common Protestantism.' Churchmen must remember that the Papal brief, which doubtless ignores the existence of the Church of England as a part of the Church of Christ, can only effectually be met by adherence to the laws and principles of the Catholic Church, and a consistent course of action in obedience to the same.

"On this point we would most earnestly impress upon all the importance of remembering that, while deeply pained at the recent proceedings of the See of Rome, indignant at the deductions drawn from them by their defenders, anxious to preserve and hand down unimpaired the integrity and proper rights of our communion, and steadfastly determined

not to abandon it in its difficulties, we do not for a moment forget the proper character of our Church; that while, on the one side, it is not a Protestant sect, on the other, it does not arrogate to itself the character of the whole Catholic Church, but that it is a portion of that Church, separated from other branches of it by schisms and differences, most deeply to be lamented; and that in defending our own liberties, we do not permit ourselves to be tempted to any measures inconsistent with the great principle of our catholicity, which we cannot abandon, without treason to the great truths on which the Church of our Lord is built."

The "suggestions" conclude with a recapitulation of the principal grievances under which the Church is at present labouring:—

"In conclusion, the committee would point to a few of the more prominent subjects which, at the present emergency, press for immediate exertion:—

"1. Freedom of the synodical action of the Church.

"2. Properly authorised courts of appeal upon all spiritual matters.

"3. Real and free confirmation of the bishops elect, according to the Canons, instead of the mere form which is at present enforced, to our great disgrace and injury, by the prevailing construction of certain statutes.

"4. Redress of the grievance caused by the late decision of the Committee of the Privy Council, in respect of the doctrine of Baptism.

"5. Guarantees for the right education of the children of Churchmen.

"6. And, postponing for the present other subjects, we would remind Churchmen to be prepared for the next general election of members of the House of Commons, which cannot be far distant; and to support such only as may be relied on for sound Church principles, and a steady determination to support such principles by their actions. The clergy, too, must remember that a dissolution of Parliament carries with it a dissolution of Convocation. They ought, therefore, to prepare themselves for procuring the election of such proctors only as will resolutely defend the rights of the Church, and protest against the silencing of her Legislature."

You will not fail to observe the very different spirit of this conclusion from that of the "suggestions" of the National Club. It contains no dark insinuations—no appeals to passion—no attempts to set class against class. It lays down certain constitutional grievances, and it calls upon those who have constitutional power, to labour strenuously, but in an orderly way, for their redress. Let not, however, the opposite party mistake this calmness and deference to law and order for weakness. It shows a spirit, calm and orderly, but firm and changelessly resolved to maintain its own. The persons who have put this paper forth, are resolved not to break the law, in spirit or in letter; but all that the law, in spirit and in letter, will allow them, they will have resort to, if assailed. They are as yet numerically weak in Parliament,

and therefore their opponents (except Mr. Colquhoun, who unwittingly owned them to be a "large party") form a most fallacious opinion of their real influence, and imagine them to be equally weak everywhere else. Those who presume upon this delusion will discover the case to be far otherwise throughout the country.

VII.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON AND MR. BENNETT.

DEC. 19, 1850.

WHEN I last wrote to you upon the affair of the Bishop of London and Mr. Bennett, the whole of the correspondence, of which the public are now in possession, had not appeared; but, notwithstanding a great additional amount of facts, very little additional matter bearing upon the general and broad features of the case has in consequence transpired, except the circumstances of the extreme haste with which the Bishop published the correspondence, announcing Mr. Bennett's resignation. Still I feel that there are points in connexion with it, which I have hardly sufficiently brought out in the letter of mine which you published yesterday.

You will have observed that the question, in its original shape, was one of the interpretation of the rubrics of the Church of England. Later, it took the shape of a specific proposal on the part of Mr. Bennett, laying down certain *criteria*—the first directed *ad hominem* to the bishop—of the ceremonies he proposed to retain in St. Barnabas' Church. But this offer is clearly to be taken as a voluntary cession of a strict principle for the sake of meeting his diocesan half way; and, accordingly, the public are as much empowered to deal with the discussion in its original shape, as if Mr. Bennett had continued to adhere to the broad statements which he had laid down last summer.

In looking at the question dispassionately, we must for the moment abstract ourselves from the special questions of dispute at St. Barnabas—questions in which the taste of the disputant may often colour his judgment—and treat it as one simply of the law of the Church of England as to the interpretation of her rubrics. This interpretation Mr. Bennett finds in those usages of the whole Church in her days of primitive purity which the English Reformers strove to restore, and in that rubric to which I referred you in a former

letter—the one fixing the ornaments of our churches as those in authority in the second year of Edward VI., when the authorised ecclesiastical courts sate in judgment upon any doubtful points. The bishop, relying upon the very proper regulation which makes the ordinary the umpire in disputed questions, concludes that he is absolute and personal judge, without appeal, upon all rubrical affairs. I cannot, I own, assent to this conclusion. What the Church allots to the ordinary, is clearly the working of a well-understood and uniform system of ceremonial, and the settling of petty disputes—not the function of creating off-hand new rubrical law upon points which may have fallen into desuetude, but on which there can be no doubt that there was at one time or another an authoritative interpretation.

In fact, the issue raised is, whether the Church of England is to be a body corporate and constitutional, governed in her services as well as in her doctrines, by laws, and courts, and legislatures—or whether she is to be a collection of little despotisms, each depending for its absolute and irresponsible government upon the will or whim, the learning or the ignorance, of the actual diocesan. The former state of things is the tendency, quite irrespective of the particular ceremonies under dispute, of Mr. Bennett's position; the latter, the shape into which the bishop's views legitimately resolve themselves.

Regarded in this aspect, the question is not one between a single diocesan and a single parish priest, but an affair vitally affecting the constitution of the Church of England, both actual and theoretical. I am satisfied that this aspect of the affair is not yet so generally taken as it will be, and the reason of this slowness of apprehension is not hard to come at. It arises from the respectability of the party who is in this particular instance in the wrong. It is almost too trite a truism for me to repeat, but it is the fact, that more mischief has been done by good men, owing to their goodness, than is easily conceivable. In the case before us, the Bishop of London is a man of known moderation, a prelate who has devoted himself to the Church for years—one who has individually, in a church which he recently built at his own cost, made an exhibition of ritualism considerably above the average standard of the parish churches of his diocese. Accordingly, people dismiss the matter with the comfortable conviction that Mr. Bennett must be very wrong—must have gone "very great lengths"—to call down such an interference on the part of his diocesan. And so they contribute their share to build up a theory of episcopal government

totally at variance with the ancient and canonical—that is to say, *pace* Dr. Cumming, *constitutional*—notion of that office, as always held by the Christian Church, and by the Church of England as a portion of that universal fold of Christians—with that theory of episcopacy, in which, for centuries, the idea of a diocesan acting without the advice of his clergy (the germ of cathedral chapters) was a thing absolutely unheard of. As long as Bishop Blomfield is spared to us, the evils of such a concession will, of course, be merely in the bud. But let there unhappily be a change; let a bishop be put in by the noble antagonist of the "mummeries of superstition"—translated, perhaps, from Hereford—with the old canonical right of opposition at the episcopal confirmation still treated as a farce—and how will the sticklers for extra-constitutional powers on the part of our bishops deal with the change? They will have themselves created the precedent by which they will be scourged.

The truth is, that with the utmost desire to show all due deference to the apostolic order of bishops—with the utmost feeling of gratitude to one who has done all the good works for the Christian Church which the present Bishop of London has done—Churchmen must yet, on constitutional grounds, narrowly scrutinize the bearings of all apparently extraordinary claims of pastoral interposition on the part of the bench of bishops, appointed as they at present are. The Church's legislature is silenced, and therefore there is no resource to meet an emergency by any provident enactment. The Court of Appeal, established seventeen years ago, was set up without the consent of the Church, and need not consist of Churchmen; finally, the spiritual Fathers are in the sole and irresponsible appointment of the Prime Minister, who may be Presbyterian, Anabaptist, Socinian, or "Christian unattached." Let the Church be given the guarantees which common sense and common justice dictate as needful to secure her the protection of her own doctrine and her own ritual—and the relations between a bishop and his clergy will soon adjust themselves. But so long as all her ancient and solemnly-guaranteed rights are held in suspense in favour of that irresponsible dictatorship of the First Lord of the Treasury—each man, priest or layman, must see to his own rights, so long as he does not (like the National Club) trench on those of his neighbours; and he must be very careful, that in waiving any of them, he does not strengthen the tenure of the dictator.

On these grounds, then, as well as on the obvious one of

fair play, which I treated of in my last letter, I am fully convinced that the Bishop of London—anxious as we know him to be, from his own words spoken and written this year—for a better adjustment of the relations of the Church with the Government—anxious for a Church legislature, and anxious for a real Church Court of Appeal—has made a very great mistake. He has unconsciously played into the hands of Lord John Russell, as well as into those of the mob, who regard Mr. Bennett's dismissal as *their* triumph, and he has simultaneously helped the cause of bureaucratic despotism and of democratic violence. The precedent of Mr. Bennett's case, unless the bishop relent, may prove a fatal one in the hands of any Whig-selected prelate.

On these same grounds, I think, as I hinted in my last letter on this subject, that Mr. Bennett's putting his resignation into the bishop's hands, was likewise a great mistake. But one must not be too hard on a mistake which was prompted by a self-denying love of peace, and by respect for the episcopal office. Is there, then, no way out of this wretched complication of embarrassments? If Mr. Bennett's resignation is not legally completed, cannot some course be adopted which may, without a compromise of self-respect on either side, adjust an affair which is, in all its bearings, a misfortune to the Church? I hear that his parishioners are in absolute despair at their impending loss, and mean, if they have not done so already, to appeal to the bishop. Cannot such an interposition on the part of those who, after all, are the most vitally concerned in the matter, be regarded on both sides as a sufficient moral reason for cancelling mutually the ultimate issue of the controversy?

VIII.

CAN CONVOCATION BE REFORMED?

DEC. 24, 1850.

I HAVE, in former letters, touched upon the injustice of the Church of England being, in practice, deprived of her constitutional right of having her own legislature for her spiritual concerns. I propose now to enter more at length into the difficulties which are supposed to environ the revival of synodical action amongst us, and to show how very easy, if the will were not wanting, would be the way to surmount them.

I flatter myself I can show that, if there is anything in these alleged difficulties, we ought, for precisely similar reasons, to be deprived of a representative government in our temporal concerns, and to live under the mild and equitable superintendence of a Cabinet responsible only to fluctuating and extra-legal influences from abroad, to clubs, to meetings, to pamphlets, and to the checks imposed upon its efficiency by those differences of opinion among its members, which would, in all probability, seldom lead to a change of government—frequently, if not always, to a paralysis of its efficiency—and the most so when the danger might be the most pressing.

You see I concede, at starting, that Convocation sadly needs reform, and is, in its present shape, unsuited to grapple with the daily increasing troubles attending our ecclesiastical polity; but I call upon those who would make this the excuse for not putting it into working condition in order to let it reform itself, to grant that, in 1799, the Parliamentary constitution of Great Britain and Ireland likewise needed reform, and was likewise unsuited to the then circumstances of the empire. Having obtained this admission from them, I will demonstrate that, by an entire parity of conditions, either Parliament ought then to have been silenced, or Convocation ought now to be allowed the means of doing its work effectually.

The first point of resemblance that strikes us between the two bodies is, that both of them are the gradual growth of events, and not struck out at once upon one definite consideration of adaptation to the work of legislation.* It is very well known that, so far from Parliament having been originally thought a constitutional blessing, it was shunned and hated as merely the instrument held by the stern kings of those times to squeeze money from their subjects. Any of your readers who has fallen in with that admirable picture of mediæval manners, Sir Francis Palgrave's "Merchant and Friar," will recollect the exquisite description of the county election, in which the successful candidate, instead of coming forward to express, unaccustomed as he is to public speaking, that that is the proudest day of his life, sets spurs to his horse, and is, with very great difficulty, literally caught to serve his shire in Parliament. Similarly, Convocation—the

* A morning journal of great circulation has, since the above was written, endeavoured to turn this fact to the advantage of its side, by using it as an argument against the revival of synodical action at all. I appeal to this letter as meeting beforehand its arguments.

assembly of the prelates, the dignitaries, and the proctors of the lower clergy—was not at first what is commonly understood by the term "synod." There were formerly synods in England, and there were also Convocations, the latter being called together to do the same for the clergy which Parliament did for the laity—vote money to the king. In time, however, as Parliaments became legislative bodies, so Convocations assumed synodical powers, and both bodies long after showed the marks of their irregular growth.

An obstacle to the efficiency of Convocation which at once stares us in the face is, that there is no Convocation for the Church of England, strictly speaking—not to talk of what is, by Act of Parliament (not by any Act of the Church), called "the United Church of England and Ireland." There are the two Convocations of the provinces of Canterbury and York, which, respectively and independently, have enacted all that we possess of Church legislation. However such an arrangement may have suited the difficulty of intercourse and the broad lines of demarcation existing two centuries ago between the South and the North—and however it may fulfil the strict letter of old canonical precedent—it is perfectly clear that it must be waived if the Church of England is, in the second half of the nineteenth century, to be healed of her paralysis of self-government. But if this inconvenience be now a fatal argument against attempting such a cure, it must have been a fatal argument against Parliamentary Government in 1799. As now there are the Convocations of Canterbury and of York, so then there were the Parliaments of Great Britain and of Ireland, a fatal impediment to the good government of either kingdom. What was done? Were both the Parliaments silenced? Nothing so preposterous was attempted; they were united, to the infinite benefit of both islands. All persons except the Repealers must own that, while the existence of a separate Parliament gave to Ireland the semblance of greater legislative power than she now possesses, it was but a semblance, and that all really great and imperial questions were decided at Westminster, just as if there were not a similarly constituted body sitting with all the same pomp in College-green. That pompous body in reality did little else than register the edicts of its haughty and potent sister; while now the Irish members and the Irish Representative Peers have the same voice and the same vote on every question, however momentous and international, which any English lord or member possesses. The history of the Convocation of York is a precisely similar detail of

a splendid nonentity. The assembly which met in the glorious chapter-house of the northern capital only echoed the enactments of the Jerusalem Chamber, except upon one memorable occasion—the final revision of the Prayer Book in 1662—when deputies from the Convocation of York were invited to assist in the deliberations of that of Canterbury. It is idle to suppose that a body representing the spiritual concerns of the counties of Yorkshire, Lancashire, Westmoreland, Cumberland, Durham, Northumberland, and Cheshire, could either be allowed to drag on in the old silent subordination, or, on the other hand, be permitted a free voice without great risk of its decisions being frequently discrepant from those of the co-ordinate body. The Parliaments of Great Britain and of Ireland passed mutual acts of Union—so might the two Convocations. There is a difference between the constitution of the two, which, although its parallel is not to be found in the Parliaments of Great Britain and of Ireland; yet, curiously enough, existed between the two bodies which were amalgamated a century earlier—the Parliaments of England and of Scotland—and yet formed no bar to that amalgamation. The Convocation of Canterbury, like the Parliament of England, consists of two Houses—the bishops forming the Upper one, the inferior clergy the Lower. In the Convocation of York, as in the Parliament of Scotland, the different orders sit in one House. And yet, when the Act of Union with Scotland was passed, the representative peers and the representative commons were drafted off to the two Houses of the English Parliament.

But the union of the two Parliaments of Great Britain and of Ireland did not suffice to render the new Imperial Legislature at all a perfect body. The anomalous and unequal representation of the people of the empire which its Lower House exhibited, called for and obtained a Reform Bill. A Reform Bill for Convocation would be no less imperatively called for, as the second act of that first real Session whose first act could hardly fail to be the Act of Union. I trust that there would not be all the difficulty in procuring the consent of the body to its own reform that there was in the case of the Parliament parallel, but that it would be a joint act of justice, concurred in by all the different sections into which the Convocation might find itself divided. A representation of the Irish Church (whose Convocation never has, as in England, sat regularly) would of course form a portion of their measures. As I am not writing a history of the constitution of the Church Legislature, I will only briefly

point out that the chief anomaly to be complained of is the very slight actual representation given to the parochial clergy in that Lower House (for brevity I speak as if exclusively of the Convocation of Canterbury, that of York having similar deficiencies), in which the deans, archdeacons, and cathedral proctors bear a proportion to the proctors of the mass of the clergy sufficient to cripple entirely the value of the Lower House as the free voice of the great body of the clergy. Passing over what must at first be legalised by the Church—the late redistribution of the English dioceses, to which the constitution of Convocation must be adapted—I will mention but one proof of the imperfect machinery of the actual body. The diocese of Lincoln contains three Archdeaconries: one of them sends proctors to every Convocation, the other two take it by turn; so that there is always one whole Archdeaconry unrepresented.

How Convocation can best reform itself, I neither am competent to lay down, nor do I think it is my function to investigate this point. I have shown that this body must reform itself before it can act, but I have also shown that it has nothing to reform which Parliament had not to struggle through before it obtained its present organization.

In the framing of its new constitution, it might very profitably study, partly for example and partly for warning, the system and the history of the general convention of that remarkable and vigorous offshoot of our Church, which has, by its own energy, in spite at first of a strong antipathy in the nation to episcopacy, taken deeper root in the United States of America than any other denomination—a salient and a difficult fact to those who argue that we are merely an Act of Parliament body—who, like Mr. Miall, follow up the assertion with the conclusion that we must be thrown down, or, like Lord John Russell, with the demand that we shall be his private farm, by virtue of his leadership in that Parliament. The American Church Legislature meets triennially (each diocese having its own annual convention on a similar plan) in two Houses, the Upper one of bishops, the Lower one of clerical and lay deputies; and its rules of proceeding are founded upon those old English traditions of legislation which our transatlantic kinsmen have inherited from the mother country.

You will observe that the Lower House contains a fusion of the laity. Such an alteration in the constitution of our Church Legislature would be something sweeping; but, I am convinced, that in some way or other, the laity must

have some voice in what is done. Without a doubt, the clergy have distinct privileges in the Christian Church, which it would be most dangerous to root up; but it is as undoubted, that these privileges are constitutional, and that the whole body of believers have theirs likewise. My proof is very simple, but to my mind irrefragable. In that most formal proceeding of a Church Legislature, recorded in the Book of Acts, that council which decided how far Jewish customs were to be binding upon the converts, the decree ran in the name of—1, The Apostles; 2, Elders; and 3, Brethren; *i. e.*, the bishops, the priests, and the laity. How the precise relations of the laity to the two other branches of the reformed Legislature are to be adjusted, is not my province to settle; but, as far as I can judge, the American precedent would not, in this instance, be quite a safe one. The natural tendency of the young republican ideas of that country, on the first drawing up of the constitution of the Convention, put too much power into the hands of the laity. Still, the presence, in *our* Lower House, of dignitaries and representatives of chapters, would of itself tend to diminish too great a numerical preponderance of the lay element. I need not say that, when I talk of lay representatives, I contemplate only absolute Churchmen, regular communicants, being eligible—and not any brawling speech-maker who may don the garb of Churchmanship for the sake of a seat in the Ecclesiastical Parliament.

In what I have said, I have treated exclusively of the Lower House of Convocation. I reserve the Upper House for another letter.

LETTERS

ON

CHURCH MATTERS.

IX.

PROSEUCHÉ—LORD ASHLEY AND MR. ALFORD.

DEC. 31, 1850.

I PERCEIVE in your paper of yesterday that my version of *proseuché*, and very clearly too the inferences which I have drawn from it, are called in question by a volunteer champion of Lord Ashley's the Rev. H. Alford, vicar of Wymeswold*—who, by the way, a very few years back was canvassing England for subscriptions to fill his village church with all those "mummeries of superstition"— high screen, stalls for "surpliced priests," &c.—which deter that noble lord from worshipping in the "Temple of St. Barnabas," as the curious may easily find in a pompously-got-up and grandiloquent description of Wymeswold Church, published in quarto by its vicar.

With all the deference due to a gentleman of Mr. Alford's classical attainments, and an editor also of the original text

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* TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING CHRONICLE.

SIR,—I have just seen a criticism extracted from a letter of your correspondent "D. C. L.," in which the authorised version of Acts xvi. 13, and Lord Ashley, who founded on it a sentence in his speech at the lay-meeting in Freemasons' Hall, are severely handled, and the word προσευχή

of the New Testament, I must give it as my opinion, that he has by no means made out a case for Lord Ashley—whom he accuses me of handling severely—or for himself. Even if I were to admit all that he brings forward, my argument would be but very slightly invalidated; and so far am I from making this concession, that I venture to repeat my belief that *my* version of *proseuché* in this passsage is the correct one. I have the disadvantage of writing at a distance from town, with very few books to consult, which Mr. Alford must accept as my excuse for not meeting him with a fuller reply.

I might venture to say that Mr. Alford has very materially helped me to establish my point as regards Lord Ashley. As I pointed out in my former letter, the famous sentence about Lydia was an attack (illogical, indeed, and very unfair, but suited for the audience to whom it was

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there used, is pronounced authoritatively to mean a building for public worship.

But I believe it will turn out on examination that in this, as in so many other cases, our translators weighed well the difficulties of the text, and gave what, after all, must be acknowledged to be the best and most scholar-like rendering.

That προσευχή *may* signify a "house of prayer," is readily conceded. Josephus, in his Life, § 54, writes, "On the following day all assembled in the Proseuché, a very large building, able to hold a great multitude." So Philo (Lyatim to Caius, p. 1011) speaks of the Proseuchæ being levelled with the ground.

But that the word in this place cannot signify a building, the verb ἐνομίζετο, which accompanies it, must, in my mind, clearly determine. The literal rendering of the clause is, "Where a Proseuché was in the habit of being." Now, who would say, "Where a chapel was in the habit of being?"

The use of this verb has, therefore, led the most eminent modern critical scholars to the inference that, there being no synagogue at Philippi (for where there was one, Paul, as his manner was, went thither and taught), the Jews assembled for prayer at a certain spot in the open air, "where was accustomed to be a Proseuché," *i. e.*, a haunt, or resort for prayer. So that we are brought at last to the authorised version for the most idiomatic English rendering, "where prayer was wont to be made."

If authority be required for such a practice on the part of the Jews, we find it in Tertullian, Ad Nationes, chap. 13, where he speaks of the "orationes litorales" of the Jews; and De Jejuniis, chap. 16:—"Judaicum certe jejunium ubique celebratur, quum omissis templis *per omne litus quocunque in aperto* aliquando jam preces ad cœlum mittunt."

If they were in the habit of doing this occasionally, even where they had "templa," it is not unlikely that the same practice may have prevailed in a town where it is implied that they had no synagogue.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

HENRY ALFORD.

WYMESWOLD VICARAGE, Dec. 24, 1850.

addressed) against ceremonial worship, in the shape of the "Temple of St. Barnabas"—compared with what was meant to be its extreme opposite, in the shape of a camp meeting, in which an Apostle was, by the learned and noble expositor of scriptural lore, supposed by preference to indulge. The cheers with which the announcement was received, and Lord Ashley's complacent *encore*, stereotyped its meaning. Mr. Alford interposes with certain reasons which lead him to conclude that, in this passage, *proseuché* does not signify a "house of prayer," but only a *spot*, "where prayer was wont to be made." He admits, you observe—and not only admits, but confirms by a quotation from Josephus—that the word *does* signify a house of prayer. In short, he concedes to me my principle, that the worship symbolised by that phrase is *not* that of the camp meeting, but of the "temple," though he brings arguments, founded on the signification of the Greek verb in the passage, to prove that after all there was a possibility that the Jews of Philippi were, from their poverty or local circumstances, compelled to content themselves with the site of a yet unbuilt *proseuché*. Suppose they were then doing so—is this an argument against the principle I advocate, and in favour of that which Lord Ashley adumbrates—that, in its earliest and purest days, the Christian Church opposed ceremonial worship? It shows that the house was the rule, and the site the makeshift, owing to unavoidable difficulties; not, indeed, a building, but a site—the greatest instalment of ceremony that is compatible with circumstance. But, in truth, if Mr. Alford will refer to my letter, he will find that I have, in my definition, actually admitted the possibility of this *proseuché* not being a building, for I describe it as "a house, or *station*, of prayer." Let me advise him, then, for the future, when he writes a reply, to ascertain what are really the statements which he undertakes to handle.

So far I have allowed, for argument's sake, that Mr. Alford is right in the signification which he assigns to ἐνομίζετο; but this I cannot admit. He renders the passage literally, "where a *proseuché* was in the habit of being," and builds very plausible inferences upon this version. But in so doing he forgets, what is a consideration uppermost in the mind of any scholar, that what is apparently the most literal version, may very frequently be a far less complete and comprehensive one than a translation which seems periphrastic; and this for an obvious reason—that, in the attempt to give word for word, verb for verb, and substantive

for substantive, we overlook those delicate shades which distinguish the verb or the substantive in Greek from what is currently allowed to be its English representative, and which the true scholar, the man who *feels* the language he is handling, is perforce obliged to preserve by means of some slight amplification or variation. There is not a language, as far as my knowledge goes, in which this is so emphatically the case as Greek. In the instance before us, the word in dispute is νομίζομαι, derived from νόμος, *law or custom; "I am considered, or in the habit of being,"* as the schoolboy would tell us. His "construe" would probably satisfy his master, but still it would not be the exact truth. Νομίζομαι means this, and something more substantive. The feeling which it conveys to a scholar is not *"I am considered,"* or *"I am in the habit of being,"* but, *"I am under such and such a law or condition of existence:"* οὗ ἐνομίζετο προσεύχη εἶναι, then, signifies, *"in a place whose condition was there being a proseuché there"*—a colouring of Mr. Alford's literal version which, as you will acknowledge, annihilates his intended *reductio ad absurdum* of "where a chapel was in the habit of being." The whole line of his argument, indeed, strikes me as somewhat parallel to that of a man who should contend that a Frenchman never could lie down, because his universal greeting was, *"How do you carry yourself?"*

The only Greek Lexicon which I have access to, is that by the two very "eminent modern critical scholars," Dr. Liddell and Mr. Scott, published in 1843, and already of high and permanent reputation. These gentlemen give, as the *primary* signification of νομίζω, the active voice of the verb in question—"to own as a custom or usage, to use customarily." Adapt the latter phrase to our case, and we have, "where a proseuché was used customarily"—a very different thing from "in the habit of being." I will not burden you with a heap of quotations; but one I must give (as a sample of multitudes of the same sort) for Mr. Alford to digest. It comes from Sophocles's "Œdipus Coloneus"—τοῦ θεῶν νομίζεται; The authors of the Lexicon elegantly translate it, "To what God is it held sacred?" We attain this meaning through a balder but more grammatical version, "Of which of the gods is it *by custom* or *law* considered the property?" Will Mr. Alford contradict this signification with a "now, who would say, 'of which of the gods is it in the habit of being considered the property?'"

So much for the verb. Now for the substantive *proseuché*. I had not until to-day consulted "Liddell and Scott" for their opinion of its meaning in the passage which has given rise to this correspondence. On turning to the word I find that they give "prayer" as the first signification, referring to the Septuagint; as the second, "*a place of prayer;* especially, a Jewish *oratory;* Josephus, and perhaps in Acts xvi. 13;" (*our* passage) "*confer* Juvenal iii. 296." You see that they lean to my version rather than to Mr. Alford's; and it is easy to understand that two clergymen having, like them, to deal compendiously with so many thousand words, would be rather guarded in pronouncing off-hand, and without giving detailed proofs, the authorised version to be in error. I have little doubt that if they were to reconsider this question especially, they would see reasons for dropping their "perhaps." These gentlemen, as you observe, refer to a passage of Juvenal, "in qua te quæro proseuchâ?" Weber, in the "Corpus Poetarum Latinorum," the only edition to which I have access, explains this word *proseucha* by "*fanum*," a *fane*, a *temple* (adding, especially, one of the Jews' or proselytes').

Mr. Alford's last is not his strongest argument, but it is certainly the most startling one in his letter. You observe that he gives a quotation from Tertullian, which informs us that *at their fast* the Jews, "*omissis templis*" pray, *aliqando jam*, "*now for some little time*," on the shore; *ergo*, says Mr. Alford, there was no "*fanum*" at Philippi! Is this carelessness, or is it the desire to establish a case? Does not every student know how minutely, variously, and rigorously ceremonial the Jewish ritual system was?—how at one time a rite was obligatory which at another season was absolutely prohibited? Tertullian says the Jews had *templa*, and he states, as a noticeable circumstance, that at one season—a season of especial peculiarity, the annual fast—they were *aliquando jam* (for a limited period, that is) to desert these "temples" (which must have been concrete things to be desertable). Therefore, chimes in the Vicar of Wymeswold, there was not a Jewish *templum* at the capital of Macedonia. Pardon, sir, "a town where it is implied that they had no *synagogue*." The place, as he says before, where St. Paul preferred, when possible, to preach at. In this concluding sentence lurks what I will only term an ambiguity. I grant there very likely was not a *synagogue*, but why not a *proseuché?* Both synagogue and proseuché mean a building for prayer, but they do not mean the same class of building; the distinction

is much that which exists, *mutatis mutandis*, between a church and a chapel. Did Mr. Alford comprehend this, or did he not? I leave him to choose between the horns of this dilemma, with one additional fact, which he must have overlooked—that the annal fast of the Jews occurs less than a week before the Feast of Tabernacles, when they were Divinely ordered for the time to desert their houses, and not merely to pray, but to live in booths—a circumstance which I have never seen adduced to prove the likelihood of their being, in the latter days of their existence, accustomed to forego the luxury of a house.

Before I conclude, I must state that, since writing the letter which has given rise to this, I have ascertained that the day I visited the Chapel Royal was by no means the only one upon which Lord Ashley has by preference chosen it as his *proseuché*.

X.

ARCHDEACON SINCLAIR AND HIS VISITATION.

JAN. 1, 1851.

SEVERAL papers of Saturday last give a conspicuous place to a letter of Archdeacon Sinclair's,* intended to explain a former letter of his, which has appeared in print, and to which I have called your attention, wherein he expresses his hope that his and Archdeacon Hale's visitation of certain churches will prove "satisfactory to the public." That letter, it seems, was *private*. I conclude, from the inverted commas and the italics, that the

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* ST. BARNABAS, PIMLICO.—ARCHDEACON SINCLAIR.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING HERALD.

SIR,—About a fortnight ago I received a letter from a gentleman, resident in an adjoining parish, informing me that "the lay inhabitants of St. Luke's, Chelsea, intended shortly to hold a public meeting, to memorialise the bishop against Tractarian proceedings." He then referred to a statement, which had been made on my authority, by the incumbent of a neighbouring parish, that "the Bishop had begun to do something to check them," and requested me to give him further particulars.

Notwithstanding a great pressure of business, I hastened to inform him, in a "*private*" note, which has since, to my surprise, appeared in many of the newspapers, that the Bishop intended to direct his Archdeacons to visit certain churches, and that I anticipated a satisfactory result.

I meant the letter to be "*private*," not merely because I did not wish

Archdeacon means, though he does not explicitly state it, that it had that magic word written upon it; and he accordingly characterises its publication as an "inadvertency" such as he had never experienced "in the course of a voluminous correspondence extending over many years." That the affair does show vast inadvertency, I entirely admit; but I must confess that the inadvertency seems to have commenced at an earlier period than the publication. His correspondent and interrogator turns out to have been a gentleman resident in an adjoining parish, who prefaced his question as to what steps the Bishop of London intended taking regarding certain churches, with the statement that "the lay inhabitants of St. Luke's, Chelsea, intended shortly to hold a public meeting" (which has since come off, with all the violence of language which was to have been expected) "to memorialise the Bishop against" what he termed "Tractarian proceedings." The Archdeacon gives us no reason to suppose that this gentleman disapproved of the measure; and so, from his silence, coupled with the wording of the extract, we may conclude that his correspondent (a gentleman of whom, as I shall show, he must have had little, if any, personal knowledge) was one of those individuals who think that they are doing their duty to the Church of England by setting the laity, as a distinct class, in array against those members of that Church, both clergy and laity, with whom they disagree; and we also learn that he was preparing to act up to his conviction. Let any of your readers put himself into the position of a dignitary so called to account, and in possession of instructions from his bishop, and say what his reply ought to have been? I think he would decide,

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my name to be mentioned, but because I could not then—and, indeed, I cannot now—fully explain in what way I expect the proposed inquiry in different places to prove satisfactory; whether by the correction of abuses, the refutation of exaggerated statements, the removal of unfounded suspicions, or possibly the judicial reference of disputed points connected with the interpretation of the Rubric to the decision of the Bishop, or, if the Bishop sees fit, of the Archbishop—a reference which is provided for in the Preface to the Book of Common Prayer, and which, having the authority both of Parliament and Convocation, ought to satisfy all parties.

In the course of a voluminous correspondence, extending over many years, I have never in any instance experienced on the part of any of my correspondents an inadvertency such as I have now stated.

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

JOHN SINCLAIR.

KENSINGTON, Dec. 26, 1850.

P.S.—The publication of a list of churches to be visited by the Archdeacons is entirely unauthorised.

without much hesitation, that it ought to have been strongly deprecatory of any such violent and irregular proceeding; and it ought, addressed as it was by one who was preparing to act *quasi* judicially to a person who proved himself a partisan, to have been worded with the most extreme care to avoid anything like pre-judgment. How far are these requirements attended to in the letter? It is very short, so I will give it in full:—

"Sir,—In answer to your inquiry, I hasten to inform you that the Bishop of London intends to direct his Archdeacons to visit all the churches and chapels in which the forms and ceremonies referred to in his late charge are persisted in. It will be my duty to hold a visitation in St. Barnabas, and I trust that the result will be satisfactory to the public.

"I have the honour to be, Sir, your faithful servant,

"Vicarage, Kensington, Dec. 7." "John Sinclair.

You will observe that the whole tone of this note—short as it is, and addressed to one who was not on the footing of "dear sir"—is one of unreserved confidence in his correspondent, without the admixture of a single word, even of caution, in regard to the proceeding upon which the lay inhabitants of St. Luke's, Chelsea, intended to embark. Is it, then, very surprising that persons who could be inadvertent enough to think that meetings, such as those with the reports of which your columns have of late been filled, can be useful to true religion, would commit the slight additional inadvertency of sending to the papers a letter of the Archdeacon of Middlesex, confided to one with whom he must have been very slightly, if at all, acquainted—which had, at least in appearance, prejudged the case, unheard, in favour of the view of the matter held by their side, dignified in the document by the term of "the public," whom he expressed his desire to satisfy, and who, they thought, would draw an instalment of that satisfaction from its publication?

The Archdeacon endeavours, and I doubt not with good intentions, to appease both sides by some further explanations in his last letter—intended at once to account for the oracular brevity of his private note, and to appease for the present, without absolutely satisfying it, the curiosity of the public as to the nature of the impending visitation:—

"I meant the letter to be '*private*,' not merely because I did not wish my name to be mentioned, but because I could not then, and indeed I cannot now, fully explain in what way I expect the proposed inquiry in different places to prove satisfactory, whether by the correction of abuses,

the refutation of exaggerated statements, the removal of unfounded suspicions, or possibly the judicial reference of disputed points connected with the interpretation of the Rubric to the decision of the Bishop, or, if the Bishop sees fit, of the Archbishop—a reference which is provided for in the preface to the Book of Common Prayer, and which, having the authority both of Parliament and Convocation, ought to satisfy all parties."

You have already called attention to the very great hardship of singling out certain churches only, and a certain style of performing service, for visitation, as if the alleged exceeding of the letter of the Rubric was more culpable than the omission of what is of necessity complied with in the course of its being exceeded. I shall again have to speak upon this head before I conclude; but at present—assuming that there is nothing to be said against the Archdeacon visiting churches A, B, C, and leaving the rest of his archdeaconry unvisited—I will briefly examine the points which he raises in the paragraph of his letter I have just quoted. No one can deny that "the correction of abuses" is a very proper employment on the part of any official, lay or clerical; though at first starting we are brought back to what I have just promised to steer, for some little time, clear of—the question, why the correction of abuses is so very imperative in some quarters, and so little so in many others. "The refutation of exaggerated statements," and "the removal of unfounded suspicions," is likewise a work not of duty merely, but also of charity, though a doubt might be raised whether the whole method of proceeding adopted, and especially the tone of that one specimen of Archdeacon Sinclair's private correspondence which has come to light, be the beginning best adapted to lead to such an ending. But there are further contingencies of a very different class which may result from this visitation:—

"Possibly the judicial reference of disputed points connected with the interpretation of the Rubric to the decision of the Bishop, or, if the Bishop sees fit, of the Archbishop—a reference which is provided for in the preface to the Book of Common Prayer, and which, having the authority both of Parliament and Convocation, ought to satisfy all parties."

The Archdeacon grounds this possibility upon a passage in the directions "concerning the service of the Church," prefixed to the Book of Common Prayer, to which I alluded in a previous letter, but which I may as well quote at full length:—

"And forasmuch as nothing can be so plainly set forth but doubts may arise in the use and practice of the same; to appease all such diver-

sity (if any arise), and for the resolution of all doubts concerning the manner how to understand, do, and execute the things contained in this book; the parties that so doubt, or diversely take anything, shall alway resort to the bishop of the diocese, who by his discretion shall take order for the quieting and appeasing of the same; so that the same order be not contrary to anything contained in this book. And if the bishop of the diocese be in doubt, then he may send for the resolution thereof to the archbishop."

You will notice that this provision only provides for a voluntary appeal, on the part of the conscientious clergyman who "doubts," or of the two or more clergymen who may "diversely take anything," to their diocesan, with a further voluntary appeal conceded to him to the archbishop, if he should find himself embarrassed. Nothing can be clearer than the meaning of this provision; it considerately creates an arbitration upon points where otherwise an ecclesiastical process would have been needful, with the paraphernalia of Chancellor and Arches Court, proctors, and civilians. But how does it tally with Archdeacon Sinclair's interpretation of it?

There are certain churches, where it is surmised that there are practices which the Bishop has power to put a stop to. Supposing this to be the case, how can the visitation of Archdeacon Sinclair's possibly facilitate this end? He answers —by bringing about a reference of disputed points to the decision of the Bishop. Doubtless, if he could succeed in compelling the parties who "doubt," or who "diversely take anything," to put their case into their diocesan's hands, with the prospect of a reference to Lambeth, he would at least have held a visitation which would not have been a mere formality. But how is he to do this? How compel such reference? The Prayer Book provides an appeal; but it does not lay down any machinery which can force the man who has no doubts, or who can only take the Rubrics in one way, and not at all diversely, to avail himself of it. Archdeacon Sinclair may argue or he may persuade, but how can he command success? No one can make me go into the County Court to try to recover money which I do not think any one owes me; and as little can an archdeacon compel a clergyman to submit doubts which, in conscience, he does not, and cannot, bring himself to entertain, to the arbitration of his diocesan, whom he is in no way compelled to consider as the *lex scripta* of the Rubric.

I do not at all wish to deny the Bishop's right to inquire into what he may think an infraction of the Rubric. This right he no doubt has; but the proceeding to which Archdeacon

Sinclair's letter is the prelude, is, I fear, the most effective way to bring this right into question, if not disrepute. There is no public ecclesiastical prosecutor-general; so that, if the mediate result of this visitation is to be, that the Bishop of London will find himself legally in a position to interfere authoritatively about certain practices in a selected number of churches, it must result from his having elicited a certain number of distinct and independent charges. These charges must have been preferred by some person or persons. The Archdeacons may perform the task of collecting them and embodying them in a form to lay before the Bishop, unless, indeed, they may, in this or that case, find themselves in the position of being at once informants and prosecutors.

We have now come back to the point at which we always find ourselves, after all—the great unfairness of constituting a one-sided tribunal for the redress of supposed infractions of the Rubrical law only upon the side which has happened to offend Lord John Russell, Mr. Drummond's butler, and Mr. Cuthbert, of "bottomless-pit" notoriety. Let it be known that Archdeacons Sinclair and Hale are collecting their evidence as to infractions of the Rubric in this and that church; how can they, without blushing, refuse to report to the Bishop—if credible witnesses can be found to substantiate it—that in this church the prayer for the church militant is not read; in that, baptisms are not performed at the time ordered by the Rubric, or in the place the Canons bid; in a third, the Athanasian Creed is constantly omitted; in a fourth, Ascension Day (not to mention other church holidays) is suffered to pass unnoticed; that in all, the provision for public daily prayers and readings of Holy Scripture, so useful and consolatory, especially in a large city, and so expressly ordered in *the same page* of the Prayer Book which contains the direction for arbitration, which Archdeacon Sinclair misunderstands, is entirely ignored; or, to take one particular instance, that in a parish of which a dignitary is incumbent, the illegal fee of two shillings and tenpence is exacted for every baptism, the result of which is, that children to a fearful number in that extensive parish remain unbaptized. How, I say, can the Archdeacons refuse to report such cases, and how can the Bishop decline to take any cognizance of them?

It may be that, after all, the Archdeacons do not entertain those exaggerated notions of their powers which they appear, from the letter before the world, to have entertained; and that all they contemplate is bringing their powers of persuasion to bear with such force as to induce certain clergymen

to refer their ritualism to the diocesan. If this be, after all, the whole scope of the visitation, I must suggest that very little inducement is held out to the latter to take such a step. Let a disposition be shown in official quarters to reform impartially and on all sides, and a feeling of confidence will at once be created. But let it be manifest that the feeling of the day is to press with a peculiar hardness on a body of men who cannot certainly be accused of having hung back from any of the reforms which their diocesan has suggested in his different charges, and these persons are compelled in self-defence to avail themselves of all their rights.

There is one more topic in the letter which I cannot pass over without an observation—the contingency of the Bishop of London referring the doubtful points to the final arbitration of the Archbishop of Canterbury, which he gravely remarks ought to be satisfactory to "all parties"—that is, both to his favourite "public," and to the congregations of the "certain churches and chapels." As I have shown, not only is the reference to the bishop quite voluntary, but the bishop's reference to the archbishop is equally so. All the incumbents of all the churches in the diocese of London may take the opinion of their diocesan, and yet, if the Bishop has sufficient reliance on his knowledge, the Archbishop of Canterbury may have no more to say to it than than the Archbishop of Paris. What, then, is the scope of this voluntary introduction of the Archbishop of Canterbury's name on the part of Archdeacon Sinclair? It is always a delicate matter to introduce into such a letter as this, names of persons in distinguished positions; and every real member of the Church of England must feel an instinct of reverence towards the see of Canterbury. But their legal obedience has its legal limits, and any compliance which they may render beyond must be the voluntary offering of personal feeling, and a renunciation of strict rights. What legal right has the Archdeacon to call upon an inculpated incumbent to refer these doubts, mediately though it be, to the present Archbishop of Canterbury? Dr. Sumner is, no doubt, a very amiable gentleman, and, as Archbishop of Canterbury, he has certain prerogatives. But neither his amiability nor his prerogatives confer upon him the inspiration of theological learning or judgment. There exists, however, one test of his theological learning and judgment—and *that* a judgment touching a vital doctrine of the faith, in which he practically assisted and to which he gave his formal assent; and, in this judgment, in the words of the Bishop of London, "errors are passed over in silence," which are

"wholly irreconcilable, as it appeared to me, with the plain teaching of the Church of England and of the Church universal in all ages."

I cannot for an instant suppose that this clause of the Archdeacon's letter can have any countenance from his superior, for it is quite impossible to conceive that the Bishop could, under any contingency, call in, to settle his doubts, a theologian of whose joint handiwork he has authoritatively spoken in the words which I have just quoted. But in proportion as we acquit the Bishop of London of complicity in this suggestion, we must bitterly regret that he should have entrusted so difficult and so delicate a task as the visitation in question, to an official who shows such want of taste, to say the least, as to volunteer, upon his own responsibility, the introduction of the name of the present Archbishop of Canterbury as a satisfactory ultimate referee to "all parties," when the party accused all hold, as dear as life itself, the "one baptism for the remission of sins" as a cardinal verity of the Christian faith.

XI.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON'S REPLY TO THE CLERGY OF THE ARCHDEACONRY OF MIDDLESEX.

JAN. 7, 1851.

THE reply which the Bishop of London has recently delivered to the address from the clergy of the Archdeaconry of Middlesex, on the occasion of the Papal aggression, possesses an interest superior to its immediate subject-matter, from being manifestly intended as a species of official programme of the pending visitation. Viewed in this light, it is deserving of a careful examination; in making which I will not swell this letter with any observations upon the portion of the reply having reference to the proceedings of the Church of Rome.

His lordship, having disposed of this portion of the subject, succinctly sums up the duties of the clergy of the Church of England:—

"It will be our duty, as ministers of that Church, to be more than ever active in carrying out the designs of its institution; in dispensing the

pure Word of God, and his holy sacraments; in maintaining its apostolical order and godly discipline; neither falling short of its wholesome rules, nor going beyond them."

Nothing can be more true, or better put, than this is. The next paragraph, though containing a considerable amount of truth, seems more open to question:—

"But it is more especially incumbent upon us, at the present crisis, carefully to abstain from doing or saying anything, whether in our public or our private ministrations, which may wear the semblance of an intended approach to the distinctive doctrines or discipline of an erring and corrupt Church; from using language which may appear to symbolize with its teaching; and from reviving practices which were purposely rejected and laid aside by our own Church at the time of its reformation."

Why should abstinence from symbolizing with what is distinctive of error and corruption be more incumbent at the present crisis, or—the necessary correlative of that statement—less incumbent again when the pressure of the crisis is removed? Error and corruption ought at all times to be treated with an equal distance; they are absolute, and not comparative terms; and the mode of dealing with them on the part of the Church of England ought similarly to be fixed and absolute. As I pointed out in my letter on the "Circular of the National Club," the Church of England holds distinctively the doctrines of the Universal Church; and she also distinctively holds ceremonies derived from what she has inherited from her former self, and retained at the time of her reformation. Her plain duty, then, is to maintain these doctrines, and to sustain these ceremonies in the time of crisis as in the more seductive seasons of outward tranquillity, if she have faith in the divinity of her mission, and the truth of her credentials. This sentence of the Bishop's is preparatory to paragraphs in which, I am sorry to say, his lordship manifests that tendency towards prejudging, which is the natural result of the position in which circumstances, unfortunately dealt with, have placed him.

"This duty I have urged upon the clergy in my visitation charges of 1842, 1846, and 1850; in every one of which I censured, in the strongest terms, all attempts to fraternise with Romish error or superstition, and all ritual innovations, introduced, as it is said, with the design of making our own Church approach more nearly to what is termed 'the Catholic standard;' that is, in fact, the standard of the Church of Rome—not that which our Reformers believed to be the standard of Holy Scripture, and of primitive antiquity.

"The disapproval of all such attempts which I have expressed in public to the clergy at large of my diocese, I have also signified in my private admonitions and counsels to those individuals among them who have been most inclined to ritual peculiarities sanctioned neither by the Church's order nor by long-established custom."

These are, doubtless, weighty charges; and, had the enunciation of them been accompanied by proof, they would have gone far to put the accused parties out of court. But they are not so accompanied, and I more than doubt whether proof would be forthcoming. Without it, they are merely the somewhat rapidly hazarded sentiments of the speaker; and the chief regret one feels in reading them is, that a prelate so high in station and in character should have been impelled to compromise his *quasi*-judicial position by giving utterance to words which wear the shape, without containing the substance, of a judgment, and which no disproof or withdrawal can ever make as though they never had been published.

There cannot be a fairer sounding claim than that of "the Catholic standard"—the standard of the Church and of the Faith, which we so loudly claim to belong to and to hold. The Bishop of London cannot wish any other standard to be set up by the Church of England as a whole, or by his own diocese as a part of that whole, than the standard of Catholic —that is, of universal—truth. It is the standard propounded by the last revisers of the Book of Common Prayer, and expressly laid down by them in "the Preface" with which that book commences, where they state that they rejected certain proposed alterations "as secretly striking at some established doctrine or laudable practice of the Church of England, *or indeed of the whole Catholick Church of Christ.*" So what his lordship must intend to imply is, that certain churches in his diocese, aiming at this Catholic standard, have unhappily fallen in with the Roman standard, and mistaken it for the rightful object of their search. The question might be raised, whether his lordship is not forestalling his visitation, and making the verdict antecedent to the evidence; but I will not here enter upon this branch of the discussion, most sincerely trusting that the result of the inquiry may be, in Archdeacon Sinclair's view of the matter, to remove unfounded suspicions on the part of his lordship as well as of "the public." I likewise waive the point whether the Bishop has the right to assume any ceremonial to be an innovation before he has investigated it in fact and in law.

What *is* "the standard of the Church of Rome," as dis-

tinct from "that which our Reformers believed to be the standard of Holy Scripture, and of primitive antiquity?" The latter standard I have already shown to be a standard of ceremonial worship, and even of gorgeous ceremonial worship. The mere fact of ceremonialism and of gorgeousness does not bring the Chapel Royal, of which the Bishop of London is Dean, and at which Lord Ashley is sometimes an attendant, within the category of his lordship's rebuke; no more does every parallelism with Roman worship—that is to say, upon the hypothesis that our Prayer Book represents our Church. Still it is undoubted that there are differences between the ceremonialism of the Church of England and that of the Church of Rome. The principal ones may be thus summed up:—Service in a dead language; prayers to Saints; celebrations of Holy Communion without lay communicants; the elevation of the Host; administration of Holy Communion in one kind; and the cycle of observances dependent on the reservation of the Host. There are many others, of less moment; but these may fairly be assumed as the chief. Does the Bishop of London imply that he believes that any of the clergy in his diocese indicate any desire to introduce any of these Roman practices, which our Reformed Church has rejected? If he does not, he should not make the charge which he has done. Let him charge them with over-attention to ceremonialism, or with mistaken views of the intentions of the Church of England, when she orders that "the chancels shall remain as they have done in times past," and "that such ornaments of the church, and of the ministers thereof, at all time of their ministration, shall be retained and be in use, as were in this *Church of England* by the authority of Parliament, in the second year of the reign of King Edward the Sixth"—let his lordship, I repeat, make such charges, and he opens questions which can be met with discussion and proof, and do not contain any *primâ facie* imputations on the character and honesty of individuals. But his way of putting it—that, *in fact*, these clergymen, in their alleged innovations, mean to adopt a Romish standard which was purposely rejected at the Reformation—is a random accusation, founded, I most entirely believe, on misapprehension, and easily to be refuted by historic evidence. As I showed in a former letter, things much more startling might be, but for wise reasons have not been, re-introduced, which come within the standard of those ceremonies which were not purposely rejected, but purposely retained, by our reformers and by the restorers of the Prayer Book, in 1662.

His lordship continues as follows :—

"The present crisis, which has brought the Church of England into more direct and immediate conflict with that of Rome, has made it my duty to speak still more openly and strongly, and to endeavour, by all the means in my power, to check the growth of practices which I firmly believe, in every instance, are likely to smooth the way for a transition to the Roman communion, and in some instances, I fear, are indicative of opinions, on the part of those who use them, which are at variance with the doctrines of our Reformed Church. I cannot but suspect that many of the forms which have been of late introduced into the celebration of the Holy Communion, are the expressions of belief in a doctrine emphatically denied by the Church of England, and are nothing less than acts of adoration done to the supposed corporeal presence of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ."

This is a severe charge; and, coming as it does from one whose every formal word has weight, might, I think, not unseasonably, have been kept back until his lordship had either ascertained that it was unfounded, or could, in place of "I cannot but suspect," substitute "I have proof to show." The accusation is no less than that of the wilful introduction, by clergymen of the Church of England, of the signs of a belief in a doctrine emphatically denied by the Church. Such a charge on the part of one's diocesan makes silence impossible. The belief of which the Bishop of London suspects the expression, is that of the corporeal presence in the Holy Communion, which, as the Church of England pronounces, "taketh away the nature of a sacrament"—*i. e.*, transubstantiation. What grounds has the Bishop to make this statement upon a surmise? While the Church of England denies this assertion of the Church of Rome, she holds that doctrine of the presence of our Lord in the Holy Communion, which, as I have shown in a former letter, is expressed in the statement of our venerated Catechism, that "the body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper." The Lord's table is the site of the cause of this effect—the cause itself, the communion office. Such a site, such a cause, such an effect, are surely all provocative, in a ceremonial worship like that of our Church, of many signs of great outward reverence. Other forms of Christianity do not hold this doctrine—the Kirk of Scotland, for instance, other Calvinistic bodies abroad, and many dissenting sects at home; and accordingly their outward forms correspond with their dogmatic opinions. The Scotch, for instance, have no permanent Lord's table at all. When needed, a table is brought into the church—when done with, it is taken away

again. The Church of England, on the other hand, consistently retains a permanent Lord's table in the place of honour in her churches—the same place, in a word, where the high altar stands in the churches of the Roman communion. But while her theory is thus consistently symbolised, the laxity of practice which has crept into her ministrations, makes itself felt in the very disgraceful state of neglect in which, chiefly in country parishes, the Lord's table is too often left. In some places, on the other hand, local advantages have maintained greater conformity between theory and practice, and among these, as might naturally be supposed, the Chapel Royal is not the least conspicuous. Here we find not only a Lord's table standing at the east end, carefully railed off from the rest of the chapel, and covered with a velvet cloth, both of which are common practices enough, but also decorated with massive candlesticks and an alms-dish of precious metal.

Were Dr. Cumming to make the same accusation against the Dean of the Chapel Royal, which the latter makes against certain unnamed churches, would the Bishop not find it as difficult to bring persuasion to the mind of his accuser as their incumbents may find it to convince him? And yet the Chapel Royal is but the tradition of an age of greater observance. The inculpated churches are the fresh products of an intentional revival of feelings of reverence for the Lord's table, which the doctrine of our Church is supposed to demand—this is conceded on both sides. Common sense, then, would indicate that the latter would, as a matter of course, be more pronounced than the former; but, whichever church or chapel is foremost or behind in the extent of its fittings, it is impossible to frame such a formula as should (consistently with their respective codes of Christian belief), to a Calvinist and to the Bishop of London alike, exculpate the Chapel Royal from, and inculpate the other churches in, a dangerous approximation to Roman doctrine—however (a quite different question) they may, or may not, be correct exponents of our rubrical law. In making this assertion I have in my eye the points controverted between the Bishop and Mr. Bennett, which it is fair to assume were fresh in the mind of the former, and none of which (independently of their legal sanction) necessarily indicate any doctrine discrepant from that of the Church of England. But I had rather seek my proofs from foreign Protestant countries, and from other days of the Reformed English Church.

I do not suppose that Luther will be accused of any over-

deference to Roman doctrines or practices, but still he and Calvin held different views on the subject of the Lord's Supper; and the form in which Luther's views developed themselves was that of an altar with crucifix and lighted candles, and a minister in the olden vestments. We have seen already that the Prussian Evangelic Church continues the crucifix and candles, and places the minister on the west side of the altar. This body is a forced fusion of Lutheranism and Calvinism, amalgamated by an order of the late King of Prussia, and I believe that it has had the success which in general attends government-made religions. But as a fact towards the present argument it is very much to the point; for no one will predicate overweening attachment to Romanism on the part of the Prussian people!

I now come home again, and refer the Bishop to those divines whom he is known to hold in honour—the names of the seventeenth century, which are still as household words in our Church. I could flood your columns with quotations from and about them, but I shall content myself with very few.

Eminent among eminent men stands, by common consent, the English Chrysostom, Jeremy Taylor. A lost work of his has recently come to light, and been published by a fellow of Queen's College, Oxford, with proofs which leave no doubt of its authenticity. The title of this treatise is "Reverence for the Altar." It would, from one end to the other, be a profitable study for those who share in the Bishop of London's apprehension that the ceremonies of certain churches and chapels "indicate disloyalty to the Church of England." One quotation must suffice to show what Jeremy Taylor's judgment on this head was:—

"Now, if places became holy at the presence of an Angell, as it did in Josuah's case, to whom the captaine of the Lord's Host appeared, and in Jacob's case at Bethel, and in all the Old Law, for God alwayes appeared by Angells, shall not the Christian altar be most holy where is present the blessed body and bloud of the Sonne of God? I but, what when the Sacrament is gone? The relation is there still; and it is but a relative sanctity we speake of; it is appointed for his tabernacle, it is consecrate to that end; and certainly the destination of man, the presence of the Sonne of God, the appointing it to a most holy end, the employment in a most sacred worke, and the presence of Angells (which, as S. Peter saith, desyre to look into these mysteryes), if all this be not enough to make a thing most holy, there is no difference, nor can be any in the world, betweene sacred and prophane."

Among the learned prelates who were called in at the time of Charles II. to restore the Book of Common Prayer (than

whom a better selection could not have been made), one of the most distinguished was Matthew Wren, Bishop of Ely. Wren had previously fallen under the castigation of Prynne, in "Canterbury's Doom," for the furniture of his chapel, which is thus described in that scurrilous tract:—

"Now what an Arminian and Popish innovator this prelate was in all particulars, the Popish furniture of whose chapel, with basins, candlesticks, corporals, altar-cloth, a chalice with a cross upon it, and other Popish trinkets, as appears by his own book of account, costing him £159 4s. 1d., and how great a persecutor, silencer, suppressor of godly ministers, and people, the world experimentally knows."

You observe candlesticks in the above inventory. I should not be surprised if Wren's interpretation of that Rubric which I am ashamed of quoting so often, about the second year of Edward VI., led him to light the candles on them. It is at least certain that John Cosin, Bishop of Durham, another of those bishops who settled the Prayer Book in 1662, and an even more eminent man than Wren, speaks in the following terms, in his "Notes on the Prayer Book":—

"Amongst other ornaments of the church then in use, in the second year of Edward VI., there were *two lights* appointed by the injunctions (which the Parliament had authorised him to make, and whereof otherwhiles they make mention, as acknowledging them to be binding) to be set upon the high altar, as a significant ceremony of the light which Christ's Gospel brought into the world; and this at the same time when all other lights and tapers superstitiously set before images were by the very same injunctions, with many other abused ceremonies and superstitions, taken away. These lights were (by virtue of the present Rubrick referring to what was the use in the 2nd of Edward VI.) afterwards continued in all the Queen's chapels during her whole reign, and so they are in all the King's, and in many cathedral churches, besides the chapels of divers noblemen, bishops, and colleges, to this day. It was well known that the Lord Treasurer Burleigh (who was no friend to superstition or Popery) used them constantly in his chapel, with other ornaments of fronts, palls, and books upon the altar. The like did Bishop Andrews, who was a man who knew well what he did, and as free from Popish superstition as any in the kingdom beside."

Will the Bishop of London impute to the great men whose words and deeds I have quoted a leaning to Roman doctrines and Roman practices condemned by the Church of England? This is impossible. But if this be impossible, then it rests with his lordship to justify by proof the grave accusation of unfaithfulness which is being disseminated through the length and breadth of the land as his judgment of men untried and uncondemned, and willing to take their place with the

Andrewses, and the Taylors, and the Cosins of other days—men who appeal from the pert insolence of a latitudinarian Premier, the brutal ferocity of a mob, the empty froth of a public meeting, to the framers of our Prayer Book and the divines who restored it, when other ministers, other mobs, and other meetings had combined to pull it down.

His lordship concludes:—

"The use of these forms, together with other observances, copied from the practices of the Romish priesthood, induces unlearned people to think that, after all, there is no such great difference between the Reformed Church and that of Rome, and that the passing from one to the other is merely a question of believing or practising a little more, or a little less—not one which nearly concerns their eternal salvation.

"It is for this reason that, while I object to any *needless* departures from the prescribed order of the English Church, in the way of either *defect* or *excess*, I think the fault of excess is the more dangerous of the two, where it tends to countenance the superstitions of the Church of Rome; and less defensible, both on that account, and as not having long-established custom to plead in excuse, as is the case with certain faults of defect, such as the disuse of the Offertory and of the prayer for the Church Militant on Sundays when there is no Communion. No such excuse, however, will serve to defend omissions which involve any point of doctrine, or which the law and custom of the Church alike condemn.

"But, though I desire to put a stop to those observances and forms, which are neither authorised by the Church's order nor sanctioned by long-established practice, I must still adhere to the opinion, which I have before expressed, that the Rubric should be *scrupulously observed* when no *insuperable* difficulty stands in the way."

I would venture to ask the Bishop what is his test of an omission involving doctrine? He quotes as an instance of the opposite the omission of the prayer for the Church Militant and the Offertory. Is there no such doctrine as the communion of saints? and do not these two ceremonies eminently prefigure it? But enough of this discussion. I wonder that the Bishop of London can suppose—if there be any risk of persons deserting the English for the Roman communion on account of their craving for a greater degree of ceremonial worship than they ordinarily find in our churches—that these individuals would be retained through means of his present line of action. Such persons must be amongst those whose temperament requires outward assistance as a help in their devotions. Is it not evident that the gratification of this temperament within the limits of the Church of England is, in *their* case, the most likely expedient to keep alive their allegiance to that Church? It is a fact, of which any person can on any Sunday and any week-day convince himself by visiting the suspected churches, that this class of mind has enough

representatives to fill them very amply. To tell these persons that the ceremonial in which they delight, which they feel to elicit the response of their own inward religious sense—the ceremonial which they know not to accord with any of the leading distinctions of Roman worship which I have given above, and to fulfil the doctrine of the famous English divines of former times—must be abandoned, under the stigma of unfaithfulness for having closed with it—is far more likely to dishearten them, to shake their intellectual convictions of the truth of English doctrine, and to alienate their love and confidence in the English communion—than the continued use of that form of worship is likely to discontent them with their Church, and induce them to seek their food in Roman pastures. But when we behold, in addition, that while such hard measure is meted out to them, the *defects* excused by long-established custom—the chilling neglect of all observances of piety—the churches closed from Sunday to Sunday—prayers, psalms, and Scripture monotonously gabbled by hireling curate and hireling clerk—Holy Communion celebrated but thrice a-year—the dirty and neglected Lord's table contrasting with the selfish pews under lock and key and softly cushioned, and the poor contemptuously thrust into the worst places—are quoted as less blameworthy than what at worst was zeal outstripping discretion—and all this on account of a panic raised by a change in the organization of another communion, with which they had no more to do than the Bishop himself—could we doubt much, if any unhappily should fall away, whether it were the ceremonies with which they had worshipped, or the manner in which they were stripped of them, which most conduced to that sorrowful ending.

XII.

MR. BENNETT'S RESIGNATION.

JAN. 9, 1851.

AMONG the various complicated and distressing questions which arise out of Mr. Bennett's case, there is one to which I have not yet seen public attention drawn, but which is so important that I conceive it a duty to bring it under your consideration.

The state of the case, as it appears to the public eye, is,

that Mr. Bennett put his resignation into the hands of his diocesan, to be called for on a certain contingency, and that his diocesan has called for it. But this is not the whole legal import of the transaction. True it is, that he has put his resignation into the Bishop of London's hands, and that the Bishop has called for it. But the Bishop of London is not merely Mr. Bennett's diocesan—he is also patron of the living which Mr. Bennett holds; so that the latter clergyman put a general resignation into the hands of his patron, and his patron has called upon him to complete the act.

Here, then, we have a new aspect of matters—a view of the subject entirely fresh, and, as I need not assure your readers, one which neither the bishop nor Mr. Bennett could have any idea of when they brought the question to the point which necessitates our grappling with it. The danger of trafficking in sacred things has been, in all ages, a subject upon which the Christian Church has manifested a godly jealousy, and the civil courts have assisted her in repressing the abuse. Accordingly, simony, as the offence is termed, after the name of that first great offender, Simon Magus, is cognizable in our courts of law, and has often been treated by them. Among the agreements to which a simoniacal character has been imputed, are general bonds of resignation, put into the hands of the patron by the incumbent on his induction, by which the latter binds himself to resign his cure when called upon by the patron. For a long time these general bonds of resignation were tolerated in our courts. At length there arose a case—the Bishop of London *v.* Fytche—which came in error into the Court of Queen's Bench from the Common Pleas, the report of which you will find in 1 East, 487. Judgment was delivered in Easter Term, 1801, and all the judges affirmed the judgment of the Common Pleas, on the ground that all the current of law was in favour of the legality of such bonds—Lord Kenyon, C. J. (who, by the way, by a very curious misprint of East, is quoted as Lord *Mansfield*), calling attention to the fact that the learned Bishop Stillingfleet, 1698, wrote a most elaborate discourse against the decisions of the Court of Common Law on this head, but still thinking that authority too strong to allow the question to be raised. Mr. Justice Buller (who, although popularly known by an unenviable *sobriquet*, is a weighty name in Westminster Hall) is even stronger than his chief, for he commences with saying, "Nothing but the number of positive authorities would induce me to concur in the opinion of the Court. I cannot help thinking that there was a great deal of

good sense in the opinion of Mr. Justice Powell, and I think with him, that if the judges in ancient times had seen the inconveniences that have since ensued from the use of these bonds, they would not have pronounced upon them as they did." But still he thought the train of decisions too strong and uniform to go against them.

But this apparent triumph was the beginning of the end; for a writ of error was brought into Parliament, and after counsel had been fully heard at the bar, the House of Lords, upon a motion of Lord Chancellor Thurlow, reversed the judgment by a division of 19 to 18—the bishops righteously voting with the Chancellor. Thus a great and true principle was established by that august tribunal.

The patrons, so driven out of general bonds of resignation, betook themselves to bonds in favour of a particular person. These met with the same fate in the House of Lords in 1826, during the Chancellorship of Lord Eldon, in the case of Fletcher *v.* Lord Sondes, reported in 3 Bingham, 523, when these bonds were declared illegal, on the express ground of their being simoniacal. An act of Parliament came the next year to the rescue of these particular bonds, but left the general bonds as it found them.

In the course of the hearing, Mr. Justice Gaselee quoted an opinion from Bishop Gibson, to which I beg to call your particular attention. The oath referred to is that taken upon institution:—

"Bishop Gibson contends that this oath, whether interpreted by the plain tenor of it or according to the language of former oaths in the notions of the Catholic Church concerning simony, is against all promises whatsoever."

You are now, sir, in possession of my case. There has existed, since the commencement of this century, a righteous prohibition against general bonds of resignation given to the patron; and interpreting this law according to the spirit, and not according to the letter, a very grave question seems to arise, whether Mr. Bennett's general promise given to the patron may not be *of the nature of* such a bond. I do *not* for an instant say that it is such a bond, but that it is of the nature of such a bond, and therefore, to say the least, a very undesirable thing for any clergyman to give or for any patron to receive, and still more so when that patron is also the diocesan.

What, then, is to be done in this dilemma? Mr. Bennett is under a promise to resign his living, to which his bishop

keeps him, and from which, as a man of honour, he has not the least idea of shrinking. But, in fulfilling his duty as a man of honour, Mr. Bennett is running a great risk of violating an important law both of Church and State, on a most delicate question; and in accepting this resignation, the Bishop on his side is running a risk of being a participator in that violation. One solution, and one alone, presents itself as possible. This is, that the Bishop should freely waive Mr. Bennett's resignation. In so doing he would perform a generous and magnanimous deed; he would enlist on his side the sympathies of candid men; and he would in no way damage his legitimate episcopal rights in matters ritual or doctrinal.

XIII.

THE LATE MEETING FOR THE REVIVAL OF CONVOCATION.

JAN. 18, 1851.

I OBSERVE in your columns of this morning the report of a meeting held under the auspices of the Metropolitan Church Union, in Freemasons' Hall, in favour of a measure which I have already advocated in your paper—the revival of the Synodical Government of the Church of England.

Your reporter states that the meeting was not very numerously attended. This fact, to which its appearance in your paper will give such extensive currency, renders it incumbent on one who takes a lively interest in the great cause of the restoration of the self-government of the Church of England to explain the causes of what might appear, but for the reasons which I shall give, a rather damaging circumstance. Those who know anything about the condition of the "large party"—as High Churchmen will, I doubt not, for the future, be called for shortness—will be well aware that, though as a party very strong and very united, it contains, as the necessary condition of its largeness (without which one would hardly credit its being so), a certain proportion of grumblers—of men who think their merits unappreciated, and their importance underrated by their more fortunate, but not more deserving, coadjutors. This necessary class in all parties is, in the one before us, represented by certain individuals who have by various means accumulated a body bearing the magnificent appellation of the Metropolitan Church Union; a

body having little weight in the movements of the "large party," not to be accepted as its representative, and mainly, indeed, kept up by the kindness and fidelity of some of the general members of that Union, who will not desert actual leaders whom, were they to choose again, they never would select. Consequently, a meeting got up solely under its auspices, was not likely to be a very numerous one. It may, in fact, be esteemed as so much clear gain to the Church cause that it met with the success which it has obtained, and as such I am willing to accept it, although, of course, not unreservedly. Many others, I doubt not, will gladly view it in the same light. It is, in short, an independent testimony to the need of self-government on the part of the Church of England, and to the grievous evils which have arisen from the paralysis of her synodical action.

There was another reason which led to the meeting being thin. Last summer a meeting for the same object, the revival of Convocation, was held in London, not under the auspices of the Metropolitan Church Union alone, but under the guidance of that society, in combination with the more weighty London Union on Church Matters, which sufficed to fill not merely Freemasons' Hall, but, in addition, to crowd to suffocation the far larger St. Martin's Hall. For politic reasons, the petition to her Majesty, voted and signed at this meeting, has not yet been presented. Many persons, therefore, who would have gladly attended such a gathering, even at the call of the Metropolitan Church Union, felt that it was ridiculous to take part in a new meeting while the action of the former one was not yet completed.

There was a third obstacle to the numerical value of yesterday's demonstration, which I shall enlarge upon more at length; the means adopted by its originators to give piquancy to their end. This end was one in which all sound Churchmen sympathise, the revival of synodical action in the Church of England. The means chosen were the ventilation of an idea that the late proceedings of the Pope had rendered a session of Convocation more imperative than before, so as *expressly* to meet it. I cannot, I own, see the cogency of this view. The Church of England is crippled by the State in everything she can do towards mending her own organization, or saving the souls committed to her keeping. But she is still the Church of England. Her existence, as such, is a continued protest against the claims of modern Rome to universal supremacy. So long as her bishops claim to rule as the successors of her ancient hierarchy, so long as she dis-

penses the bread of life throughout her parish churches as our Lord and His apostles commanded that it should be dispensed; so long does she protest silently, but with a force and an eloquence more telling than all words, against Cardinal Wiseman and his new hierarchy. If a special protest were needed, and I think a special protest *was* desirable, as a refresher of her claim to Catholicity upon this overt denial of it by the present Bishop of Rome, her bishops were quite competent to make it without a meeting of Convocation. It is really child's play to be told, that, with the fearful and daily increasing need of the means of self-assistance which the State, dog-in-the-manger like, denies her, our Church is to hold her first real synod for 130 years, merely to fulminate a protest (which they will ignore) at those against whom she has never whispered a word as vicars apostolic (that is, *vi termini, bishops*) of the divisions of a Roman Catholic England, simply because they have changed Uranopolis into Clifton, and Samosata into Hexham, in their signatures. If the originators of the meeting merely meant that the Pope could only be undeceived as to the Catholic character of our Church by her being permitted free scope to display it, and that we ought, for his sake and for that of Englishmen and Englishwomen, to take those steps which would lead to such a desirable consummation, I quite agree with them. But their words do not imply this, and still the good sense of the meeting persisted in so understanding them. Large as were the letters in which "Papal Aggression" figured at the head of the advertisement, yet, when it came to the business itself, reality could not fail to assert its sway, and the pressing practical evils of the Church formed, as they ought to do, the principal plea adduced in support of the demand for synodical liberty.

Mr. Sweet's speech is especially deserving of careful perusal on this account. Had we 15,000 clergy all as zealous as he seems, the public would be better satisfied than they are with Archdeacon Sinclair's letters. On the whole, then, I think it is clear that the meeting will do good; but, in saying this, I must strongly protest against one or two expressions used in the course of the discussion. The most striking of these is the vehement disclaimer which Mr. Hoare (the chairman) made against the supposition that the movement in favour of Convocation was at all "Tractarian" in its origin. What was the need of this? Why evoke all the feelings connected with that word of mysterious and unfathomed danger, Tractarianism, at a moment when no one was think-

ing of it? Mr. Hoare might truly have said that the paralysis of synodical action was a grievance felt and acknowledged by candid men of all parties in the Church, and he might have quoted his authorities accordingly. But why drag in, with so perverse an ingenuity, that scarecrow of Tractarianism, a term which, I will answer for it, that gentlemen would find it difficult so to define as not to dissatisfy either himself or his interrogator, probably both. The truth seems to be, that Mr. Hoare is a gentleman of that peculiar turn of mind which never can be satisfied, when fighting a great and a real battle, without augmenting the forces of the enemy by a supplementary corps of bugbears, created and recruited into their ranks by his own imagination. But as he has used the word Tractarian— a word I have never hitherto employed in any letter, and which I trust to have very seldom, if ever, occasion to bring forward again—he must pardon my putting a few questions to him as to what he means by it. Ask an ordinary and unlearned believer in alarmist prints, what the word means, and he will tell you, "Tractarian! why, of course, a Papist in disguise, a Jesuit, a man who eats the bread of the Church after he has betrayed her," &c. But Mr. Hoare is not of this stamp, and he has, I will very plainly tell him, no right to use the word in the sense he has done.

The "Tracts for the Times," or, as they are usually called, the "Oxford Tracts," are, as he must be aware, a collection of ninety different publications, varying in size and importance from the handbill to the bound volume, and published between 1833 and 1841. They are the work of many authors, some of them being reprints of writings by divines of eminent and acknowledged importance, and the difference of tone between the different Tracts is very marked. They are the independent productions of independent minds, freely allowed to energise each in its own way; and they are only combined by the fact of their intention being to revive, at a period when the attempt was more difficult and more daring than it is now (thanks to *them*, in a great measure, for the change), those genuine doctrines of the Church of England, contained in her formularies, and held by her great writers of the 16th and 17th centuries, which, we have Mr. Colquhoun's testimony for asserting, are now those of a "large party." One, and one only, I believe (having in various ways heard the names of most of them), of all these writers, has lapsed from the Church of England—the famous Mr. J. H. Newman, the only really important trophy, out of all the *Church and State Gazette's* catalogue, which the

Church of Rome has won since the commencement of the Church revival among us. The last Tract, the well known No. 90, is Mr. Newman's writing, and expresses only his ideas; but still it is an Oxford Tract, and hence "Tractarianism" is a telling word in the eyes of some persons who would be very sorry to have the writings of every or any one individual of their own section quoted as symbolical of their profession. But the charge is most unfair. Mr. Newman, very shortly after his secession, and again in some recent lectures, confessed that his position in the Church of England, all along, was merely an experimental one. Consequently his sayings and writings are absolutely no criterion of those of the "large party" whose faith in her is fixed and not tentative. While saying this, I do not mean to disparage the services which he rendered to that Church while his position in her was wearing, in his own eyes as much as in those of others, an appearance of fixity so great as to be absolutely an intellectual phenomenon. At all events, however, "Tractarianism," so called, has now not a more bitter foe than Mr. Newman; yet it flourishes in spite of him; and, to conclude this digression, without exacting or thinking of any pledge of agreement with the Oxford Tracts. Tractarianism is, of all nicknames, the most absurd, destitute of truth, and destitute of wit. But Mr. Hoare does not confine himself to rebutting any supposed "Tractarian" savour in the strong feeling which has arisen for synodical action. He asserts that the "Tracts" are silent on this head, and that the first man who revived the cry was a gentleman of different religious views, in 1835. How stands the case? The Tracts in question were started at a period of alarm and danger, when the question was not, shall the Church have synodical action, but,—shall there be a Church at all, shall episcopacy be swept away, and the Prayer Book remodelled? And yet, in the *second* of these Tracts, published September 9, 1833, *on the same day as No.* 1, I read, relative to the suppression of the ten Irish bishoprics :—

> "Now, what am I calling on you to do? You cannot help what has been done in Ireland, but you may protest against it. You may, as a duty, protest against it in public and private; you may keep a jealous watch on the proceedings of the nation, lest a second act of the same kind be attempted. You may keep it before you as a desirable object that the Irish Church should, at some future day, meet in synod, and protest herself against what has been done, and then proceed to establish or rescind the State injunction as may be thought expedient."

In No. 5, published on the 18th of October in the same

year, talking of that same monstrous cry which some persons had got up, then as now, for a revision of the Prayer Book, I observe:—

"When corruptions, prevalent among the professedly Christian world, render it necessary for her to state the substance of her faith in articles (as was done in A.D. 1562), or when circumstances appear to require any change or variation, either in the forms of her liturgy, or in her general internal government, the King has the constitutional power of summoning the houses of Convocation, a sort of ecclesiastical parliament, composed of bishops or clergy, from which alone such changes can fitly or legally emanate."

But I have really said too much about Mr. Hoare; for his assertion was absolutely annihilated by the very gentleman whom he called upon to move the first resolution, Mr. Hughes, a person unknown to the world, but who, from the tone and tenor of his speech, must be one of those real and earnest men to whom, in the time of trial, the Church will not in vain look as her defender. Mr. Hughes truly and beautifully said, regarding the aspersed originators of the Oxford Tracts, that they were the men to whom we owed the commencement of this wonderful revival of genuine Churchmanship, which men wonder at and cannot understand, and which is still going on, in spite of their wonder and their astonishment, and of the enmity of many.

The other point against which I would very strongly protest, is the obtrusive manner in which a certain self-important person with a foreign name, Dr. Biber, endeavoured to make the meeting the vehicle for his own peculiar views, by a singularly abrupt and trenchant assertion, dropped with the easy assurance of a man who knows he is stating a wrong thing and would fain brazen it out, of a doctrine which the Church of England no way commands us to hold, that the Church of Rome is Anti-Christ. How the reverend gentleman should be so wanting in tact as, in a meeting, the professed object of which was to deplore the want of a synodical voice in the Church of England, to prove that, in *his* case at least, the void did not exist (I will not say of a national synod, but) of a general council of the universal Church, I cannot very easily decipher. Still less do I wish to enter into the question whether the Church of Rome be Anti-Christ; one, be it remembered, wholly distinct from the question whether the Church of England be not entirely justified in her protest against the many errors and corruptions unhappily to be found within that portion of the Christian Church. I will dismiss it with a remark and a *quære*. My remark is, that

it is a simple truism to say that everything which militates against the law of Christ, every sin, every crime, every dishonesty to be found anywhere, is of the nature of Anti-Christ; but that being of the nature of Anti-Christ, does not make these transgressions, individually or collectively, the one fearful portent of the future, *the* Anti-Christ of prophecy. My *quære* is, Supposing it to be the doctrine of the Church of England, that the Church of Rome, a Church whose orders and whose sacraments she recognises as valid, be Anti-Christ, what name does, or can, the Church of England devise for that fearful development of evil which all thinking men see gaining head all around us, the denial of all faith, of all revelation, of all substantive supernatural religion?

Happily, however, the meeting did not take its colour from Mr. Hoare's ungenerous disavowal of supposed Tractarianism, or from Dr. Biber's theological dogmatism, any more than from Mr. Cox's and Mr. Cummins' eccentric interruptions. Injudicious as I cannot but think it in one of its principal premises, yet, as your readers will see, it mostly forgot those premises when it came to action. It remains a valuable testimony to our extreme need of real Church government; and several of its speakers drew pictures, striking and sad, of the wretched state of disorganization engendered amongst us by that lamentable deficiency.

XIV.

THE REVISION OF THE PRAYER BOOK.

JAN. 20, 1851.

I HAVE no wish to be an alarmist; but I am equally little desirous of withholding a necessary warning, from any fear of the imputation of spreading needless terrors. Information has reached me, from quarters which have the means of being very well informed, of movements on the part of the secret enemies of our English Church, which it were well that Churchmen should take timely note of, so as effectually to stifle them.

Lord Ashley's meeting in Freemasons' Hall, viewed by itself, was a failure. It was not a particularly large one, and it has left little behind, on the score of oratory, beyond the Lydian sentence, Sir E. Parry's nautical eloquence, and Mr.

Bevan's bold assertions that the clergy have always been in the wrong, and the laity always in the right. But the promoters of this movement, though perhaps not great as theologians, nor brilliant as orators, are sufficiently able as tacticians; and they have sufficient confidence in their cause not to be over scrupulous in the means they adopt to promote it. A "Loyal Address to her Majesty," as what, by the constitution, she is *not*—"the earthly Head of our Church"—praying her, somewhat vaguely, to exercise "*the wholesome power of interposition*," was, as you will recollect, one of the principal results of that assembly; and, six days after it was held, we saw an advertisement in the *Times* proclaiming the organization of a "London Committee for the defence of the Protestant faith," composed of leading members, lay and clerical, of that party which charitably assumes to itself the exclusive appellation of "Evangelical," under the chairmanship of Lord Ashley. This committee was once, and, I believe, only once, advertised in that paper; certainly I have not noticed any further advertisement of it; and the unwary might, therefore, not unnaturally be led to conclude that it was a *coup manqué*. Not so, however. The tactic is, it seems, first to procure quietly—by such means of course as the managers of the scheme consider jusifiable—signatures to that address; then to have it presented; then, I conclude, a Parliamentary debate; then (her Majesty's ministers stepping in, like the good fairies of a child's tale) to have a commission issued to the two metropolitans and certain judiciously selected bishops to revise the Prayer Book; and finally, by Act of Parliament, to endeavour to establish the result of their learning and impartiality in lieu of that Book of Common Prayer which the English Church possesses by the joint act of Church and State, of Parliament and Convocation.

Such, sir, is the report which has come to me from quarters which do not speak without authority; and if it be any corroboration, I may observe that this was the policy which, ever since I first heard of the meeting that laid the train, seemed to me must be the one which was in preparation.

But there are not wanting corroborative proofs of its extreme probability. My first evidence is the person to whom English Churchmen should always yield the first place, the Archbishop of Canterbury. It must be fresh in the memory of all your readers, that, in one of his Grace's recently published replies to addresses, he deprecated the recent agitation, as rendering a revision of the Prayer Book "further removed than ever." *Further removed than ever!*

I leave it to any unlettered man of common sense to say what is the feeling implied in these words. It must never be forgotten that a special *protegé* and friend of his Grace's, appointed by him to an honorary stall at Chester, is Dr. M'Neile—the open advocate, years ago, in print, of a "bracketed Prayer Book." The *Globe*, too, the professed organ of the cabinet, contains an article in its number for Thursday last, which is so important, as indicative of the tendencies and wishes of those in power, that you must excuse a somewhat long extract:—

"It is impossible to affix any intelligible character to her (the Church's) profession or practice, unless we bear steadily in mind that she is essentially a machine for embodying the spiritual element in the changing public opinion of the day, and not a contrivance for transmitting sacraments or defining creeds. On any other theory, such a Church as we have in England is either a contradiction or a living outrage on every pretence of religious independence. Her government by the Prime Minister, her passive immobility, her obstinate silence, the absolute nullity of her censures, the thousands of her professing adherents who laugh outright whenever her ministers outstep the modest sphere of office-bearers in a national establishment—these are all incidents and marks of bondage which would be too intolerable for the meanest sect of Jumpers to submit to, which the Roman Church derides and scoffs at from her pride of place, the recognition of which would be degrading beyond belief to a purely spiritual establishment, but which become, we do not say merely intelligible, but suitable and decent, in our Department of Public Worship. These facts cannot be got over, and however they may jar with the superb tone which the Elizabethan Reformers sometimes assumed, in an unwise deference to the prejudices of their day, it is foolish to ignore them, and dishonest to speculate on the faith that the uninstructed rich or poor may do so. It is a great misfortune that the true position of the Church of England was not brought out more clearly—we may say, more offensively—in the sixteenth century. A real Nag's Head consecration would have saved us from a world of our present difficulties. Dr. Arnold used to assert that there was nothing more useful than for a nation to have a revolution scattered here and there in the course of centuries, to attest the emptiness of all Divine right, and keep alive the principles of popular sovereignty. In like manner, we deeply regret that there exists even the small superficial evidence which can be cited in support of the exclusive spiritual pretensions of the Church of England. If her Erastian side had been thrust more prominently forward, she might have had more trouble in conciliating waverers; but we should not at this day be molested by the perverse pretensions of the Tractarian clergy, nor reduced to the alternative of shocking sincere prejudices or complimenting away the rights of the English Crown and people."

The *Times*, also, has not obscurely hinted that, if need be, the laity must be brought down upon the observances of our Church; and the *Morning Herald* does not find it inconsistent with its unflinching conservatism to advocate, as it has done

in the most open language, in more than one article, that there must be a revision of the Prayer Book.

On the nature and effects of such a revision, conducted by the hands that will conduct it, I need not address a word to those whom the preface of the Prayer Book describes as "sober, peaceable, and truly conscientious sons of the Church of England." My present purpose is rather to open the eyes of those who are either weak and vacillating members of that body, or else dissenters from her, to what will be the inevitable result, viewing it as a civil question, of such an attempt —although, in so handling the matter, I may seem to be taking up the ground of expediency rather than of principle.

I postpone the obvious consideration, that such an attempt is a palpable confession, on the part of the promoters of the movement, of having been hitherto in the wrong; for did they not feel that the Prayer Book was unmistakeably *against* them, and *for* us, they would never for one instant have contemplated so violent a measure as the struggle which must and will ensue on a Parliamentary attempt to alter it.

The agitators probably hope that the changes which they may insinuate will be so short and few—if we are to count the number of words they may propose to vary and those they will leave—that they will find but little difficulty in persuading the national mind, save a few "bigots," that such inconsequential alterations are a cheap exchange for charity and comprehension, and for the development of the idea of a State Church—of a Church of which rumour tells that a right reverend prelate, the diocesan of not the smallest provincial city or the oldest see in England, first said that it ought not to have any doctrines, and then corrected himself by admitting that it might hold the divinity of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity.

But men are not to be so easily deceived. They know very well that the smallest word may often be the point of the sentence—the shortest clause the gist of the whole document—the omission of a monosyllable the parent of ten or fifty years' litigation in the Court of Chancery. So the commission may quietly substitute in the creed, *as the Prussians have done*, "Christian" for "Catholic;" retrench one or two words in the baptismal service, which dare to say that "this infant is regenerate;" one or two words in the Communion Office, which speak of the body and blood of Christ as "present;" one or two words in the Office for the Visitation of the Sick, which convey to the dying man the gracious tidings from him who is accredited to bear them, of the forgiveness

of his repented sins; one or two words in the form of Ordering Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, which send forth men empowered to do these great things; and then they may smilingly turn round and say, "Here is your Prayer Book—a little improved, to be sure—one or two obsolete and undesirable expressions retrenched—but the whole pretty much as we found it. See, we have not presumed to quarrel with what David said in the Psalms, and we have left the State Prayers, not to mention that for the High Court of Parliament, quite untouched."

But, sir, there is the "large party." What will the "large party" do? The agitators, I most entirely believe, have the most erroneous idea of the principles and rule of conduct of this "large party." Their own idea of any outward form of religion is so purely political, so entirely derived from the notions of a political party, that they cannot conceive any higher or more unearthly principles of conformity. Some folks, they fancy, are, on secondary grounds, the supporters of the Establishment—answering to Ministerialists; others, dissenters—answering to the Opposition; and they dream of times of peace and compromise, and of times of struggle for the good things of the State, existing between these two parties, just like the vicissitudes of Parliamentary warfare. But any men really holding in the English Church a view of Christianity in which Establishment and Nonconformity are accidents, and not essentials, is an idea as much beyond them as the electric telegraph is beyond the scope of the Polynesian. They think—"Let us only put down the compromises with Popery unhappily adhering to the Prayer Book, and we have put down the evil. Some few benighted creatures will fly to the Cardinal; the remainder will soon quietly accept what they cannot help, and learn to bless our interference."

Victims of judicial blindness are those who think this; and miserably will the worshippers of expediency, the disciples of *laissez aller*, smart for it, if they give credence to the song of such false sirens!

The "large party" clings to the Established Church of England—not because it is established, but because it is a Church—not because her Majesty (happily for her own spiritual welfare, and we bless God therefore for it) is a member of it, but because Christ founded upon a rock his Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church—of which One Church the English Church is part and parcel. They are deeply thankful that the abundant mercy of Providence should in this land have made Church and Establishment one and the same thing,

and they are very anxious that this alliance may not be broken. But once make it a question between the two, once make the formularies of the English Establishment no genuine voice of the Catholic Church—and you make her ministers by the thousand, themselves and their families, hearthless and houseless, and you drive the laity by troops into dissent—the dissent of the disestablished Book of Common Prayer—a dissent which cannot fail, much as they may struggle against it, to be embittered by the feeling of the deep wrong to their souls which has been inflicted on them. You will be bold men if you dare this, albeit Ministers of the Crown, or bishops, sent by them to rule the flock of God. You are never tired of declaiming about what you term the cruelty which, on the restoration of Royalty in this land, compelled so many intruded ministers to restore our churches to their rightful holders—how will you qualify an act which should gratuitously drive the rightful holders out of their churches and their parishes?

You must not consider that the process of expulsion will be either a short or a silent one. It will not be *la Reine le veut* to the act of change, and then *exit* the "large party." Every clergyman of England has sworn at his ordination "always so to minister the doctrine and sacraments, and the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and this Church and realm hath received the same, according to the commandments of God." Consequently, until *Church and Realm combine* to vary anything, each clergyman is bound, as he values his solemn oath, day after day to go to his church, and to use unchanged the Book of Common Prayer, in spite of twenty acts of Parliament unsanctioned by the Church to the contrary; and I have no doubt that all the clergy of the "large party" will continue so to do. Are you then prepared to bring the police to every church in the kingdom where the new-fangled ritual is not adopted, and to carry off its minister to the county goal? Till you have done this you will not have expelled the "large party," or its opinions, from the Establishment.

When you have effected all this, do you think that you will enter upon a very quiet or enviable epoch? Will you not be haunted by sights and sounds of the distress of body and of soul which you will have caused?—the desolation of the congregations deprived of their pastors, the wails of the wives and of the children driven from comfort to beggary, and the stern submission of God's priests, going forth into the wilderness so that they may serve Him acceptably?

I am not declaiming—I am not scene-painting. Such will, without fail, be the result of any attempt to obliterate by act of Parliament the Catholic character of the English Prayer Book. Will the Ministers, will Lord Ashley and his party, be bold enough to run such risks? I cannot think so, if once they are taught that such are the risks which they will have to run to win success.

High Churchmen differ very widely from Lord Ashley and his followers. It is absolutely a mystery to them how honest men with ordinary faculties can read the Prayer Book as the latter do. But as these accept the Prayer Book, the "large party" has never attempted to assail them; and as they find no difficulty in living under the actual Prayer Book, they cannot say that they are hardly used. High Churchmen trust their cause to truth, to that truth which they know to be enshrined in the Book of Common Prayer, and they go on amid many difficulties to do the work of the Church of England with quiet confidence. But on the other side we hear the voice of hatred, and the broil of angry passion—"Out with them, out with them." Well, let the Ministry and their new allies turn us out; I have warned them what they will bring about by that act of desperate madness!

XV.

MR. BENNETT AND THE BISHOP OF LONDON.

JAN. 21, 1851.

YOUR paper of Saturday contains, so far as the principals are mutually concerned, the ultimatum of the Bennett affair. It is true that Mr. Bennett is still incumbent of St. Paul's, but, with the self-denying determination which marks his character to a fault (for it was a fault, though one of a generous nature, to abdicate his constitutional position by conferring upon the bishop and patron of the living a summary power of dismissal), he has refused even to think of any course but the literal fulfilment — irrespective of the conditions under which he tendered it, or of the legal dilemma which may be involved in it—of his promise to the Bishop. The Bishop, on the other hand, has refused to tell the parishioners the grounds upon which he holds Mr. Bennett unfaithful to the Church of England; for upon these grounds only Mr. Bennett put it

in his power to displace him; and, as the result of this refusal, the parishioners are foiled in their intentions—strictly legal, peaceable, and respectful — of subjecting, through means of an amicable suit, the Bishop's impressions to that judicial scrutiny to which they are as liable as those of the humblest curate, and which they hold to be, in the pass to which matters have come, the only way of arriving at the right.

So we are driven to form our own conjectures upon the data before the public; and I have no hesitation in saying that the conduct of the Bishop is to me perfectly inexplicable. His lordship is a kind-hearted man—one who, I am sure, means to act justly; and the constitutional character of the Church of England must be very familiar to him, from the prominent part he invariably takes in every measure intended to facilitate the exercise of constitutional powers on its part; and yet we see this prelate performing an act of pure and simple despotism, to the detriment of one whose great zeal and usefulness he owns while doing so, and whose voluntary deference for the episcopal office alone it is that has empowered his bishop to be a despot over Mr. Bennett, while he is a constitutional bishop over every other incumbent in London.

And what is the offence that has called down this magisterial severity? Mr. Bennett, by untiring exertions, completed the building of a church for the poor, with a residence for the clergy, and schools adjacent, the church embodying that idea of the English ritual which Mr. Bennett held. The Bishop, aware of the general intention of Mr. Bennett's ritualism, consecrated the church, and then was present at a dinner given by Mr. Bennett on the occasion, uniting the rich and the poor—at which he acknowledged his health, when given by the incumbent, in a speech from which I make two extracts:—

"The Bishop of London returned thanks. Before he proceeded to the pleasing duty assigned him by his friend Mr. Bennett, he was anxious to assure them, and he did so with the greatest sincerity, that he had experienced the highest gratification in coming among them on this occasion; and after the solemnities of the morning, by which a new house of prayer had been dedicated to the honour of God, he thought it was most fitting to preside at such an entertainment as this, where rich and poor were met together.

. . . . . .

His lordship then paid a high compliment to Mr. Bennett, for his successful efforts to furnish so complete a provision for the spiritual wants of the neighbourhood, and expressed his earnest hope and confidence that the church and schools so munificently provided would be the source of inestimable blessings to all around."

Very shortly after, his lordship wrote to Mr. Bennett, complaining of certain practices in the new church, of which he commanded the discontinuance. Of these, some were alternative interpretations of the Rubric, and therefore beyond the scope of his injunction, unless voluntarily submitted to him—others of them were things not ordered, and not very judicious to introduce, but difficult to prove illegal; one being a form of administering the cup, as fully realising all requirements as the common one; another, a motion of the hand; and the third, the use of words, most innocent in themselves, and forming a portion of the sermon—a part of the service left to the preacher himself to frame. *Two only of the counts were clearly against the Rubric.* Of these Mr. Bennett at once proved one to be a simple fabrication; and *the other was a concession in a matter of form, only made in six exceptional cases, with the intention, in two of them, of retaining conforming Roman Catholics in the Church of England, and in July last, at the Bishop's first admonition, absolutely discontinued.* Curiously enough, it so happens that two of the revisers of the Prayer Book in 1662 (Wren and Cosin), who introduced the Rubric prefixed to the Prayer of Consecration (in which mention is made of the priest standing before the table)—upon which Mr. Bennett founded the position which he took during that most solemn part of the service, and which the bishop impugned—happened to think with him, and against the Bishop of London, on the questions of the lighted candles, and of the place of the priest at the consecration—if, that is to say, their words and their actions are any criterion of their thoughts. So, whether Mr. Bennett were right or wrong in this particular, he was right or wrong with the revisers of 1662; and any unfaithfulness exhibited by him in this particular was unfaithfulness on their parts.

The controversy between him and the Bishop continued, with the interval of a journey to the Continent by the latter, and the interlude of the Russell riots — eliciting, on Mr. Bennett's part, that most unhappy offer (just thrown out in July, and shaped in October) of resignation, and a proposal for an understanding on certain data which the Bishop declined to accede to, and which he met by the urgent demand to Mr. Bennett to resign, at a time when Mr. Bennett was fighting his gallant battle against popular frenzy. Then came the publication of the correspondence, and the interposition of the churchwardens, of which an immediate result was, that, in the service of St. Barnabas' Church, *all* the points objected

to by the Bishop (except one) have been waived—with a clear understanding that Mr. Bennett approved of their proceedings—even that of the lighted candles, of which, in strictness, the Bishop was not competent, on his *ipse dixit*, to order the discontinuance, nor the clergyman to accept such mandate, if he believed it contrary to the Rubric. The single exception was the position of the priest at the Prayer of Consecration—an exception, as I have shown, not taken without very high authority. Here stands the matter, so far as Mr. Bennett is concerned. The Bishop's position is, that he continues to exact the performance of a promise given upon the supposition of his considering Mr. Bennett "guilty of unfaithfulness to the Church of England"—while he neither will say categorically that he does so think him, or, if he so thinks, upon what grounds he does so. The result is, that a parish priest, eminent for zeal and self-devotion, and greatly beloved by his flock, is ejected from his cure untried—for his ejector will not lay, nor suffer to be laid, the indictment—and uncondemned, for there is no charge against him but that compendious one alone—

"Sic volo, sic jubeo, sit pro ratione voluntas."

On the other side, we see that clergymen convicted of the most barefaced profligacy (I have one in my eye whose brutal licentiousness came before the public a few years back) are only punished by a temporary suspension. And when we see such things going on about us, those wretched secessions to the Church of Rome, which are so greedily caught at as the excuse for anything and everything, are laid to the score of the ceremonies of St. Barnabas. In the interim, Lord John Russell has had his triumph over the bishop who stood up against him in the Hampden and the Gorham cases—the mob is satiated—and Mr. Broderip and the butler are justified. Can the fear of these have been in any degree a ruling motive in the late proceedings?

There is a view of the case, personal to the Bishop, which I could much wish were brought before him. As I pointed out in my last letter, the integrity of the Prayer Book is in peril from a Parliamentary revision. Once let it come to this, the Bishop of London must—he cannot help—placing himself at the head of those who are resolved to fight for it. Nay, he has as much as pledged himself to do so, in a letter of his to Mr. A. J. B. Hope, which was published in the papers last year, in which he ignores any but a synodical

revision of our formularies. "I hold that until the Church's Articles and Formularies are altered by the authority of Convocation, or of some Synod equal to Convocation, her character as a teacher of truth remains unchanged."

The clear deduction to be drawn from this remarkable passage is, that his lordship can see but one body competent to change the teaching of the English Church—Convocation, or some Synod equal to Convocation. If, then, as there is too much reason to fear, our apprehensions prove true, who will be his lordship's stanchest troops in the campaign against the Ministerial reformation? Those men who will have felt most keenly the hardship of punishing Mr. Bennett, as he has been punished—even on the Bishop's hypothesis of his holding the ritualism of that Prayer Book, and something more, on all the charges—while all the clergy who have revised the Prayer Book for themselves, issued their own commission, and retrenched whatever seemed good in their own eyes, are allowed to go scot free—being only guilty, we hear, of the more pardonable fault of defect. His lordship, I doubt not, will *then* sound the alarm. But will he find his troops as much disposed to trust themselves to *his* generalship as they might have been three months ago? I very much fear that they will expect, in addition, a council of war elected by themselves, and I cannot but apprehend that he will find that some of his recent sayings will be, to his astonishment, perverted into weapons of the adversary.

XVI.

LORD ASHLEY AND THE REVISION OF THE PRAYER BOOK.

JAN. 24, 1851.

IN your paper of yesterday I find a letter from Lord Ashley, in reply to an advertisement put out by the London Union on Church Matters, which contains the same intelligence, respecting the proposed scheme for an attempted revision of the Prayer Book, which I communicated to you in my letter which appeared on Monday. The careless reader of this oracular manifesto might be led to conclude, that it proved the baselessness of the apprehensions which prompted that letter, and upon which the resolutions of the London Union were founded. A more careful examination of its

singularly guarded phraseology, viewed in connexion with corroborative circumstances, will infallibly lead us to a directly contrary conclusion, and almost justify us in saying *habemus confitentem reum.*

Lord Ashley is an old member of Parliament, a practised speaker, and a practical writer of letters—one long compelled to keep in good humour and patience as turbulent and headstrong a troop of followers as, I should think, ever ranged themselves under the banners of any leader. His lordship, when on his legs, may sometimes let his ideas carry him rather further than prudence might dictate; but, pen in hand, he is as reserved as the most phlegmatic could desire. What, then, does Lord Ashley's denial say; what does it leave unsaid? It says:—"I may perhaps be allowed to assure you and the gentlemen who have advertised the statement, that it is not in contemplation by myself, nor, I firmly believe, by any of those who took part in the meeting of the 5th December, when I had the honour to be chairman, to procure a Royal Commission, or any other authority, for a revision of the Prayer Book, either latitudinarian or otherwise."

Observe the wording—"*is* not in contemplation." Is this an unconditional denial? Is it any denial at all of such a Commission *having been* in contemplation? Is it not an acknowledgment of the fact? It is an almost physical impossibility that Lord Ashley, if he could have said so, would not have said, "No such idea has ever been entertained." He has *not* said this—he *has* said, "it *is* not in contemplation;" and the inevitable conclusion is, that the contemplation was entertained, and that some prudential consideration or other has led to its present postponement. I have been informed that a "hitch" occurred. From which side, spiritual or temporal, the hitch may have come, I do not venture to speculate. We know—this is all we do know from Lord Ashley's letter—that the attempt to alter the words of the Prayer Book is "further removed" (to borrow the expression of the Archbishop of Canterbury) than it was some days back. But we also know that when Lord Ashley and his meeting got up the address to her Majesty to exercise her "*wholesome power of interposition,*" they could not have intended merely to play a First of April prank on the *gobemouches* of London; and your paper of Saturday, which I had not seen when I wrote the letter, contains a pattern card of noblemen and M.P.'s whose signatures have already been procured to that document. That address, too, has just been adopted at a public meeting at Southampton, reported with a flourish of

trumpets in a morning contemporary. Happily, however, there is no room for conjecture, for an announcement of his lordship's intention has appeared in another morning contemporary of yesterday. This communication professes to be official, and is honoured with the position and the type which are reserved for paragraphs coming from authority.

It commences with a tolerably accurate recapitulation, cast in the phraseology which the quarter from which it emanates would naturally give it, of the report, adding (a fact new to me) that a private version fixed upon the Duke of Bedford as the peer who was to bring the scheme forward in the House of Lords at the very commencement of the session. It then continues [the *italics* are mine], "*We are enabled to state* that there is no truth whatever in the report. We can say this *most positively* on behalf of the noble lord who presided at the meeting, and we believe we are equally justified in saying it for the other noblemen, members of Parliament, and private gentlemen, under whose auspices the meeting took place. But we have much pleasure in adding that the noblemen and gentlemen alluded to have determined on using every means in their power to obtain, immediately on the re-assembling of the legislature, a Royal injunction to restrain the Puseyites from inculcating principles and practising ceremonies which are wholly unsanctioned by anything within the boards of the Prayer Book. The effect of this will be to turn out of the Anglican Church, by one fell swoop, the whole brood of the Tractarian clergy."

Can anything be clearer? Who has enabled your contemporary to make such statements? How can it speak "most positively?" Who has given it "the pleasure of adding?" These are not questions thrown out at random. Lord Ashley has chosen to enter personally into the controversy by contradicting a report identical with one to which I gave currency in your columns. He is bound, therefore, to state whether this paragraph has appeared with his privity; and he is, moreover, bound—a perfectly different question, and one which he cannot escape from by merely giving a negative answer to the former one—to state whether its subject-matter be true or false. If he neglects to do so, its truth and accuracy stand confessed.

What is it that these "noblemen and gentlemen" are using every means—*with whom?*—to obtain? "A Royal injunction to restrain" certain religious practices. Can I believe my eyes? A Royal injunction to restrain! Is the year upon which we are entering to be the great epoch of

the "world's fair," the symbol of toleration and brotherly kindliness between all nations and all religions? Is it, after all, only the fear of possible unpopularity which restrains Sir Charles Wood from attempting to give *éclat* to the new budget by a few Benevolences and a little Ship-money?

Supposing, for argument sake, that the practices complained of were of the offensive nature which the agitating party make them out to be, is it conceivable—were it not true—that members of both Houses, persons of all parties, would have combined so entirely to stultify themselves—would have so recklessly leagued together to bring to nought all those principles of a free constitution which we used to be told the struggles of the two last centuries have established for this empire, as we see they have done, and have ostentatiously proclaimed in the sympathetic columns of their new organ?

The state of the case, according to their own showing, which we cannot therefore conceive is over-coloured, is that these legislators, hereditary and elected, are "using every means" to "*turn out of the Anglican Church,*" *by a simple exercise of autocratic and irresponsible tyranny* (the disloyalty of the notion is theirs, not mine), *and "by one fell swoop, the whole brood of the Tractarian clergy"—all the clergy of the "large party."* After all, sir, my letter of Monday is correct in its picture of the results of the movement in its present, as it was of it in its original form—the police, and the minister dragged off to the county gaol, and the troubles that will then follow—the whole machinery, in short, of what I then termed, and still term, an act of desperate madness. Observe the jovial swashbuckler way in which the organ of the Freemasons' Hall meeting discourses of that pleasurable scene; the gusto with which it hacks again the hacknied "one fell swoop," like a "fast man" contemplating the success of a night's foray among the knockers, or a rat-catcher the trophies of the depopulated stack.

I will not trespass upon your valuable space by proving the illusory nature of the pretexts put forward for this monstrous scheme of our new reformers. I appeal to my former letters to prove that the practices which they mean to put down, and dare to term "wholly unsanctioned," comprise, actually or by implication, every form significative of that code of doctrine and discipline which the Church of England has inherited from the pure days of primitive Christianity, everything that was above the dreary level of Genevan doctrine and Genevan discipline. If there be any one innocent enough to believe that such an injunction can be effectually

carried out with the Prayer Book unchanged, if there be any who look upon this announcement as anything but a blind, they will very soon find themselves undeceived.

The party which Lord Ashley represents know that the Prayer Book is against them. That sovereign act of diplomacy which they meant to be the master-stroke of their policy, the seal of their doctrine—the Gorham judgment—brought this out unmistakeably; and it is clear that they feel it. For years and years they never tired of declaiming against that "soul-destroying heresy," baptismal regeneration; they never ceased wondering how men could be so wilfully blind as to pretend to see it in the Prayer Book. At length the important day came, and the expected judgment was delivered. This document is compelled, in every portion of its tortuous argument, to own that the scouted doctrine stands confessed through all our formularies, while so audaciously arguing that the rejection of it is compatible with the honest acceptance of them and of the emoluments thereon possibly depending. Any one who wishes corroborative evidence of this fact will find it in a series of able papers, by one who himself thoroughly disbelieves the doctrine, entitled the "Great Gorham Case," attributed to the pen of Mr. Binney. A striking article, also, in the current number of the *Westminster and Foreign Quarterly Review*, "The Battle of the Churches," while pleading for a scheme of Church Reform for which even Lord Ashley, I think, would be unprepared, acknowledges that, as the Church of England now stands, the "large party" are its most consistent members.

The upshot of the whole affair is very simple. Lord Ashley and his party are tired of the *status in quo* in the Church of England. They see that the development of that Church, so long as her essential character remains unchanged, must tend to the diffusion of her true principles. They have, in their hour of fancied triumph, learned at what a cost of principle that dear-bought victory has been gained. They have, therefore, taken the desperate resolve of endeavouring to change that character, and force new principles upon that Church. A fixed scheme like this may well afford to shift its views of policy. A few days ago the most approved course may have been to attack the Prayer Book openly; now we have the best authority for knowing that it is decided, at first, at least, to endeavour to undermine it. But the character of the attempt remains unaltered, and the real danger unabated. Most earnestly, then, do I trust that no Church-

man will allow himself to be lulled into a false security by the vague and temporary denial of one single count of the indictment contained in Lord Ashley's letter. The object of the party he represents is to throw sound Churchmen off their guard; and admirably does his lordship attempt to do so. If we relax one iota of our vigilance on account of that letter, we help on the consummation of our own undoing—a catastrophe which, if we will, we can avoid.

LETTERS

ON

CHURCH MATTERS.

XVII.

MR. BENNETT'S RESIGNATION.

JAN. 25, 1851.

I LEARN from a quarter which cannot be misinformed upon the point, that in speaking, in my last letter, upon the subject of Mr. Bennett and the Bishop of London, of a practice of which the latter complained—that of administering the cup at the Holy Communion without entrusting it into the hands of the communicant—as if it were an habitual practice of Mr. Bennett's—I have wronged him. It seems that Mr. Bennett's general practice was the usual one of the Church of England; but that in some few cases (not above ten or twelve, I hear) he administered it in the manner for which his diocesan blamed him; not on account of the inculcation or expression of any desire on his part, but in compliance with the request of these communicants themselves.

Here, then, sir, is a diminution of the possible grounds of complaint brought against Mr. Bennett by the Bishop—a further reduction of that infinitesimal body of evidence which exists to prove that a clergyman who has pre-eminently devoted his time, and health, and private income to the Church of England, and consummated all by a signal homage to her episcopate, is unfaithful to her. The longer one thinks of the

matter, the more is one tempted to ask, whether the Bishop of London has ever really weighed what is the meaning—the plain grammatical meaning—of Mr. Bennett's various letters to him, which conjointly compose that honourable engagement to resign, which—rashly, as I think, given—has been so nobly redeemed. The confidence which Mr. Bennett has placed in his ordinary, exacted on the part of the latter a judicial caution in weighing words and scanning actions, far more onerous than any which he could be expected to exercise had he, happily for all concerned, never had to deal with Mr. Bennett's case, except under the powers which he possessed by the laws of the Church.

I assume you will observe, that the Bishop *does* conclude, though he will not state it, that he considers Mr. Bennett unfaithful to the Church of England. Any other hypothesis of his lordship's conduct is too perplexing to be for one instant admissible. But we have not yet attained the Bishop's idea of what "unfaithful" implies. The same word may have a popular conversational import, very light, implying little blame, thrown out almost at random, and easily forgotten by the person inculpated under it. A friend is engaged to dinner at a particular hour; he wilfully comes too late, and the repast is spoiled. He is taxed by his host with being unfaithful to his engagement; and he bears with equanimity what, in the vernacular use of the word, is a very mild rebuke for an undeniably selfish proceeding. But let the judge in the Ecclesiastical Court pronounce husband or wife unfaithful to the other, and he has judicially enunciated the gravest censure.

This, precisely this, is the censure which Mr. Bennett enabled, by his own sole act, the Bishop of London to pronounce, not in his court, acting by commissary, after the forms of trial, but autocratically in his study, through the medium of the penny post. The notion of the parish priest being married to his church, is not a metaphor, but a reality, in ecclesiastical law. The idea is ingrained in the system; it forms, so to speak, a first principle of its action. The very word *endowment* implies it in its derivation; and in Latin *dos* means both that and a marriage dowry. What Mr. Bennett, then, said to the Bishop of London was—"I have such deference for your office—such faith in your individual exercise of it—that I waive, in *my own case* and in *your* favour, all my constitutional rights—those rights that I am co-trustee for with my brother parish priests, on their behalf as much as on my own; and that I permit you, in the solitude of your own

room, upon examination carried on in your own way, upon rules of evidence of your own devising, to pronounce me unfaithful to my spouse, my parish, and to decree a divorce."

Accordingly the divorce is decreed, the evidence refused, and Mr. Bennett has accepted the sentence; the only charges brought against him being a few ritual observances—some of them imprudent, some, *at worst, irregular;* others, I believe, though unusual, more legally regular than their more ordinary substitutes.

The case is distressing enough as far as it regards Mr. Bennett alone. But Mr. Bennett is not the only clergyman in the diocese of London. What clergyman in the diocese can hold himself to be for one instant safe, if, in the Bishop's eyes, the charge of unfaithfulness is one to act upon, but not of necessity to substantiate, against the inculpated party.

I refrain from dilating upon such a picture, so little resembling what the condition of a pattern diocese ought to be —so little like the primitive idea of the bishop, the father and confidant of his clergy, habitually sitting amidst them in his cathedral church—habitually taking counsel with them about the common welfare.

XVIII.

THE BISHOP OF MANCHESTER.

JAN. 30, 1851.

I HAVE, in previous communications, called your attention to the unfortunate necessity imposed upon us, in these times so out of joint, to keep in check that inclination to exceed rather than fall below the letter of deference to our spiritual rulers, which must be a first instinct to a well-regulated mind —although, like other good instincts, it is one requiring to be kept under by reason and reflection. Churchmen truly are placed in a fearful dilemma. Believing, as they do, in the doctrine of the Apostolic Succession, as a constitutional principle of the Christian Church, and feeling, as they do, a reverence for the person of a bishop in consequence of his office, they are often called upon to do what is of a perfectly different nature—to submit to the bishop as if he were superior to the Church itself, and to obey his edicts against the laws of that Church; or, if they will not at once acknowledge these pre-

tensions, to be taxed with being untrue to their normal principles. But, hard as this accusation is, they must bear it with patience, knowing full well that, as English Churchmen, their first and dearest allegiance is due to her laws, to her convocation, and to her Prayer Book—all standing facts, which no individual bishop, no knot of bishops, can any more contravene than the Lydian meeting could annul them. It is unhappily the case that, although our bishops, when consecrated, are truly bishops—and although, if the choice has providentially been a good one, they may make themselves in deed and feeling, as well as in office, the fathers of their flock—yet the mere fact of Dr. So-and-so being elected Bishop of So-and-so—while it may afford a pretty sufficient gauge of the dispositions towards the Church of the Prime Minister, in whose patronage, along with places at the Customs, the "office of a bishop in the Church of God" is now vested—no more guarantees, I will not say the personal orthodoxy, but even fairness towards the orthodox faith on the part of the new prelate, than commanderships-in-chief in the Indian army would be a test of military capacity, supposing their nomination to devolve upon the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the rule that guided his Grace to be notoriously concurrence with his theological opinions. The bravest and wisest officers would soon find it a necessity, in defence of the integrity of the army, not to allow such generals any more than their legitimate authority; and Churchmen, I am sorry to say, must, in defence of the Church and the Prayer Book of England, not allow the bishops to exceed their canonical powers.

Facts enough have transpired of late, even in London, to justify me in the conclusions to which I have, with no pleasure nor willingness, arrived. But the full effects of ascribing autocratic powers to the Episcopate are not to be sought in London. The evils of unlimited discretion being given to an individual bishop must be sought in some case, should such unhappily be anywhere found, of temper overcoming the ordinary rules of reverence and common respect for the Christian dead, even in a church, and a church completed and served by the deceased—of violence rendering the aggressor blind to ridicule as much as to decorum—of an acute and learned man discovering false doctrine in a letter of the alphabet, that letter being the only one which could commence a given date, or any date for anything ever done since the year 999—of a clergyman mistaking churching gifts for offerings for the dead—of all this occurring in a church where, till Lord John Russell's letter to the Bishop of Durham

had appeared, that diocesan had held a pew, and had himself officiated at holy communion and at a confirmation without hazarding a word of rebuke, or a single criticism beyond the advice of one who admired a work, and, wishing well to it, was sedulous for its improvement.

Such a spectacle as this has, I am shocked to say, been seen in a parish church of Manchester during the late season of misrule, and has attracted sufficient notice to have been the topic of comment in local papers, although, somewhat strangely, no London periodical which I have seen has yet taken it up. The chief actor in the scene which I shall have to describe is the Right Reverend Dr. J. P. Lee, Lord Bishop (as every one knows) of Manchester. Not very long after the creation of the see, the newly-made ecclesiastical division found itself unexpectedly convulsed by the refusal which the Bishop took upon himself to make, to countersigning the application from two churches for that aid towards maintaining curates which the "Society for the Employment of Additional Curates in Populous Places" renders. He adopted this course avowedly on account of his disapproval of the observances and discipline of those churches—the first principle of the Society (whose executive by its constitution comprises all the English bishops) being that it eschewed party, and that the whole soul of its proceedings—application, counter-signature, grant—everything, in short, was purely statistical; that is, in any place its munificence only required that the existing staff of clergy should approve themselves as doing all that they reasonably could, and having done so, should be manifestly not numerous or strong enough for the work. But the Bishop of Manchester does not view things as other men do. There were two curates in his diocese, whose licences he was bound, if he could prove them untrue to the Church of England, to revoke—and whose applications for assistance from the "Additional Curates' Society," if he could not prove that, he was bound to countersign. He would do neither. He continued their licences, and he strove to starve them out by not backing their applications. This magnanimous policy was proclaimed at a public meeting, in a speech such as few but the Bishop of Manchester can make; and, as was not at all curious, it set the Additional Curates' Society in a ferment. Exciting meetings of its governing committee (the only public meetings which its constitution allows) were held, and at last a resolution was framed, laying down in the most explicit terms that the countersignature of a diocesan was simply to the truth of the statistics therein contained. Every-

body thought the matter settled. But what was, to use a common phrase, as clear as the sun at noonday to everybody else, was a mystery to the Bishop of Manchester; he could see nothing in this resolution which compelled him to countersign the applications, the refusal of which gave rise to that extraordinary step of the society—and so the curates continued starving, and the Bishop had a short triumph. But things could not last so—the society found itself breaking up; and its quietest members were convinced that something must be done. All at once the wind veered, and it transpired that, if the society would, in place of what it had already said, use certain other words absolutely tantamount to its former resolution, the Bishop of Manchester's understanding would be opened, the society would be saved, and the curates would receive their allowance. The committee of the society very wisely, all things considered, took their part in this—tragedy it was not, for it ended well—farce I will not call it, out of respect to the performers—but mummery I may term it; and the breeze blew over.

A short lull it was, when the exploit which is the more immediate subject of this letter occurred. To the north of Manchester lies a suburb called Broughton, beyond which is Sedgeley Hall, the temporary residence of the Bishop. In Broughton a church was built some few years back, to which Mr. Bayne, late incumbent, added, at his own risk, a chancel of handsome architecture, and richly fitted. This gentleman died not long since at an early age. For some time the Bishop, unable to procure a pew in his parish church, rented* one at Broughton, where he regularly attended on Sunday afternoons. More than this, he has celebrated Holy Communion in the church, and he has confirmed there. No objection was heard from the diocesan, and no complaint was lodged with him. At last Lord John Russell's Letter to the Bishop of Durham was published, and the public justice of the diocese of Manchester required a victim. What victim so convenient could be found as Broughton chancel—for the Bishop was necessarily tolerably familiar with its fittings, and its founder was dead. Accordingly, one afternoon, a visit was unexpectedly paid to the church, and its results were paraded to the world in a reply to an address from the clergy of Blackburne upon the "Papal Aggression," in which the Bishop of Manchester adroitly runs into a self-laudation of

* The fact of his lordship's *renting* a pew is, as will be seen further on, disproved.

an aggression at Broughton, at least as insolent, and at least as insidious, as that of the Bishop of Rome. I will cut up the passage into clauses, illustrating it as I go on, partly by remarks of my own, and partly by extracts from a reply issued by Messrs. Atkinson and Dodgshon, the gentlemen who were Mr. Bayne's churchwardens, and from an article in the *Manchester Guardian*,* the leading liberal organ of that city.

"Nor was the prospect less hopeful to her emissaries," *i.e.*, those of Rome, "if, going, as I myself did a short time since, into a district church built in this diocese a few years ago, they found, as I did" (no one will say that these words are precisely those most conducive to make it apparent that the church in question was one in which the Bishop rented a pew, and where he had himself officiated), "the three sedilia on the south side of the church, for priest, deacon, and subdeacon, whereas our Rubric places the minister on the north." It is almost needless to remark: 1. That our Rubric nowhere says anything of where the minister is to *sit* when *not* at the Lord's table. 2. That these sedilia so placed are a portion of our chancels "as in times past." 3. That we read in Queen Elizabeth's time of *celebrant*, *epistoler*, and *gospeler*—the functionaries who, in the reformed Church of England, occupy the sedilia; and 4. That when there is a plurality of "Ministers," the excess must be placed *somewhere* during the sermon delivered by one of their body; and therefore, there being no Rubric to justify the old-fashioned altar-chairs flanking the altar, the unfortunate minister or ministers in question must, according to the Bishop of Manchester, stand at the north end of the table during the entire course of any sermon, however long; and I may add, 5. That such sedilia are found in a church lately built at the entire cost of the Bishop of London. We are then told of "the piscina, to wash the minister's hands while saying the 'lavabo' of the Romish service." The churchwardens very summarily dealt with this accusation, by the statement that the said piscina was only introduced as an architectural ornament, which "never has been, nor was it ever intended to be, used for the purpose mentioned by the Bishop."

The *Manchester Guardian* acutely asks:—

"Did he wash his hands, and did he say the lavabo of the Romish service? If not, the spirit of truth, and we think the spirit of 'Protestant Christianity' also, would have required the bishop to say so."

Again, he speaks of "One shelf for the cruets of wine

* Really, as it seemed, the *Manchester Spectator*.

and water for the priest alone in the Eucharist"—a gratuitous assumption of Dr. Lee's!—and "The altar tomb, ready as a sepulchre for the crucifix at Easter."

I reply in the words of the *Manchester Guardian*:—

"Mark the word *ready*." "Was the crucifix ever placed there at Easter, or at any time; and was it ever used in the church? Did not the bishop know that the tomb was built to receive the remains of the late Mr. Clowes, and did he not know that those remains were, and are, in that tomb? Did he ever hear—had he ever reason to believe—did he, in fact, ever believe that the tomb was for any other purpose?"

The churchwardens further explain—

"This is a canopied tomb on the north side of the chancel, in which is interred the late Rev. John Clowes, who was a principal benefactor to the chancel as well as the church. This tomb was erected by the present Colonel Clowes, of Broughton Hall (the brother of the deceased), from the designs of Mr. Wright, an architect at Nottingham. On a very conspicuous part of the tomb is a brass, with the following inscription:—" (I omit this for brevity.) "We may remark, that when the architect was made acquainted with the view which the bishop took of this tomb, he wrote to express his amazement that any one could fall into so extraordinary a mistake."

With respect to the next feature discovered by the Bishop's playful imagination, "The almorie for such as come to pray for the souls of the departed," I give the churchwardens' interpretation, without any comment of my own:—

"This is nothing but a small neat oak alms-box fixed near the vestry door, for the purpose of receiving the accustomed offerings made at the churching of women. We need scarcely observe that this was the only purpose for which it was put up." . . . . . .

We read further: "The Virgin Mary, crowned, in the stained glass above, the date of the erection of the church ingeniously disposed in a large M. (for its first period 1,000), the Virgin's sacred emblem, with A. and O. and I.H.S., amid the emblems of Christ's passion (the cross, nails, scourge, dice, coat), all copied duly from Romish artists, on the pavement beneath."

The Bishop does not record a fact which I have heard upon very good authority, that he expressed a reverend wish that the boys might throw stones through the figure in question. But the gem of the whole accusation is the M. Is the thing credible? Bishop Lee, a man of no mean intellectual calibre, a University scholar of Cambridge, a fellow of Trinity College, a distinguished schoolmaster at Rugby and at Birmingham, when visiting Broughton Church and reading this inscription—neither of them for the first time—seems at once

to lose all his learning, all his acuteness, all sense of the ridiculous, at the sight of the first letter of the only collection of letters which can possibly be used to designate 1846—or, as I said, any year that ever has occurred, or ever can occur to the end of time, since A.D. 999. *Risum teneatis amici?* And, to consummate the absurdity of the whole affair, he concludes that the builders of Broughton chancel—those daring individuals who built a *piscina* to say the lavabo at, and an almorie to receive the offerings for the souls of the departed—betook themselves to the expedient of concealing the first letter of the word Maria (a word which it is, I trust, not blasphemous to use) as the designation of one whose name *was* Maria, in the form of a date let into the pavement, and more often trod upon than read! As for the charge intended in the words, "with A. and O. and I. H. S.," I have hitherto striven, sir, to despise it rather than to be angry, but I own it is almost too much for me. The canon of Holy Scripture ends with that marvellous proclamation in the Book of Revelations, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." The Bishop of Manchester sneers at this, the voice of God himself, and he sneers at the recognised initials of the name of the Son of God! But I refrain from dilating upon what I cannot talk of in the strain which I desire to preserve in these communications.

I cannot conclude without a somewhat lengthened extract from the defence of the churchwardens, especially bearing upon this part of the Bishop's accusation:—

"We must, however, remark that this (along with the other things objected to by the Bishop) has remained exactly in its present state ever since his lordship came into the diocese, and that on several occasions he has officiated in the chancel. On Christmas day last he confirmed a number of young persons, and afterwards administered the Holy Communion. He has also officiated at other times, and on these occasions his lordship has been seated in a chair on the north side of the chancel (almost close to Mr. Clowes's tomb), while the other clergy present have invariably made use of the sedilia. Until recently the bishop has never made any complaint, except on one occasion last year, when he objected to the tile mentioned above; but this was from a motive which we cannot but admire and respect. His lordship thought the sacred symbols, from the position of the tile, were in danger of being trampled on, but appeared to be satisfied with the explanation which was then given. Not the least allusion or objection was made to the letter M.

"When we contrast the facts of the case with the statement of the bishop, we are lost in amazement. That his lordship should still persist in his views increases (if possible) our amazement, when we know that the above facts have been laid before him some time since. As he has officiated in the church several times within the last two years, without

making any complaint (with the slight exception mentioned), we are at a loss to understand how that should be considered Popery in the latter part of 1850 which was not so in the earlier part, or in 1849. Nor are we bound to assign any reason for such apparent inconsistency; we cannot, however, refrain from remarking that his lordship's objections (if he had any) never assumed a public form until after the publication of Lord John Russell's celebrated letter to the Bishop of Durham."

All this is very sad; but the details of the Bishop's visit to the church are such as to throw his own description of it into the shade. I have heard various reports of this visit—of violence of words and violence of action—which, rather than run the risk of misstatement and misrepresentation, I omit; but I am satisfied that I can record as a fact, that his lordship, in the church, spoke of the clergyman who had carried through the good work as "*St.* Bayne;" and that at first he ordered the altar-screen reared to Mr. Bayne's memory to be torn down, and the tile containing the M. to be pulled up. Happily for the cause of religion, he afterwards spared himself this exposure; but the sedilia and the piscina, I hear, were doomed—for the chancel, being unfortunately unconsecrated, is at the mercy of the Bishop, as a consecrated one would not be.

Such, sir, are a few facts from the history of the first Bishop of the great city of Manchester—the nominee of Lord John Russell; the result of that magnificent gift of *one* bishop, and that promise—never, I fancy, meant to be fulfilled—of three more, which happened to precede the general election of 1847. If sound Churchmen have, unhappily, to choose between their diocesan, in the shape of Dr. Lee, and the Book of Common Prayer, on which side is the truth more likely to be found?

XIX.

THE THEORY OF EPISCOPACY.—I.

FEB. 4, 1851.

WHATEVER may be the turn of matters in the approaching session of Parliament, it requires no prophet to predict that episcopacy, both in its English and in its Roman aspect, will occupy no little of the attention of that body which ever manifests so strange an inclination to assume the attitude of an ecclesiastical synod. It may not, therefore, be unseasonable to string together a few facts relative to the theory of

episcopacy as held in the entire Christian Church, to serve as landmarks in the discussions which must ensue on a topic during which it is clear that the ordinary supply of tart invectives on purple liveries, sumptuous palaces, and lordly domineering prelates, on the one hand—and the invariable rotund flow of responsive platitudes about amiability, and respectability, and responsibility, and so forth, on the other—can no longer suffice to stave off the real question of the constitutional position of Bishops in the Universal Church. Hitherto the controversy has been all on one side—that of the Anglican episcopate; and a species of stereotyped form of attack and defence has, of course, resulted. In this session, on the contrary, everything which the superficial Liberal of the Russell school may advance against the "Papal Aggression" will be a vindication of the Anglican *status in quo;* and every gibe he points against the latter will strengthen the position of the former. Hitherto we have heard the episcopate blamed for its inordinate wealth—the intrusive body is notorious for its extreme poverty. Hitherto we have been threatened with the expulsion of Bishops from the House of Lords—the intrusive body will not so much as dare show itself at a levee. Hitherto episcopacy has been taunted with being only a machinery to heap patronage upon the Minister, and to afford an easy provision for tutors and younger sons—the intrusive body is the spectacle of a hierarchy so little pleasing to the Minister as to have had, to dispassionate bystanders, the appearance of depriving him of all his statesmanship.

And yet both bodies, under very different external manifestations, comprise the *essential* conditions of the episcopacy as held by the Universal Church—while, in almost every detail, they wander, though in different directions, so far away from it. And yet, far apart as these directions themselves seem to be, they deviate from each other owing to a common cause. This common origin is the assumption, on the part of the mediæval episcopate, of baronial and secular dignity, as distinguished from any claim to authority which they might make or decline on the score of the divinely inherited prerogatives of the Apostolate of the Christian Church—prerogatives existing sometimes under the favour, sometimes under the persecution, but always, when true to its essential idea, beyond the power, of secular domination.

Being by conviction a member of the Church of England, I shall assume that her view of the constitution of the Christian community is the correct one; and I shall take for granted that, in concluding the Apostolic Succession to be a

primary law of the Universal Church, she is acting in accordance with the Christianity of the earliest times, which, without exception, held that the College of Apostles received the Divine Commission to transmit its *ordinary* powers to a succession of men who should, for their part, transmit the same, and so on for ever—which body of men are known by the designation of Bishops.

The outward aspect of this episcopacy at a time when the Christian Church had consolidated its outward organization, was at once majestic and practical. The dioceses were very many and very small. The heart that sent the life-blood through all the arteries of every diocese was to be found at a building in the centre of *the* town of this diocese, in the Cathedral Church—that is, the church where the Bishop had his Cathedra or Throne. Here he dwelt, and here he celebrated the majestic rites of the Christian faith, with his body of inferior clergy round him—both morally, in their joint administration of the diocese, and actually, in their stated seats in the sacred edifice. When the throne fell vacant, they elected, subject to the concurrence of the entire faithful of the district. Their nominee had to pass the scrutiny of confirmation by that Bishop to whom a wise provision of the Catholic Church had allotted the dignity of Metropolitan, and, if approved, he received the consecration which really gave him his dignity. Once consecrated, he found himself the chosen chief and president of a body of clergy whose choice and ruler he was, as they were his fellow-counsellors.

From these bishops, by a lineal pedigree of which every link can be proved, descend both Archbishop Sumner and Archbishop Wiseman, Bishop Lonsdale and Bishop Ullathorne; and yet the respective ways in which the two hierarchies have been appointed cannot be more different than each differs from the primitive type.

The first disturbing cause, speaking generally, which influenced this state of things, was one which was in itself a sign and a means of development—the organization of the parochial system, which established subordinate centres in each diocese, more or less independent of the primary centre of operations afforded by the Cathedral Church, with its bishop and its staff of clergy.

This development of necessity called for some re-adjustment of the forms of episcopal election, which might, while maintaining the position of the Cathedral Chapter (to borrow a more modern phrase), at the same time secure its representing the newer class of parochial clergy.

But this re-adjustment never arose; for events brought into prominence circumstances which tended to widen that inevitable separation which on all accounts ought rather to have been bridged over.

It is clear that the primary idea, on the one hand, of the Cathedral, and, on the other, of the parochial system, required, when brought into concurrent action, that the former should be—at all events when fulfilling its most important function of electing the bishop—the representation, the standing synod, so to speak, of all the parishes of the diocese, and of all the clergy in it. But certain of these bodies became too powerful for this due subordination to be properly maintained. In Northern Europe, to which I confine my remarks, the energy of the missionary exertions of the Benedictine order, to which common justice compels us to own that it owed, for the most part, its evangelization, had the effect of completely altering the nature of Chapters, of Bishops, and of Cathedrals. The monks were the missionaries—the parishes a slow after-growth. The result was, that monks became bishops, monastic churches were constituted Cathedrals, and their religious corporations grew into Chapters. I am not intending to blame any one for the change, unfortunate as its results may have been; events stronger than theory produced it. The result was, that the episcopate became, in theory, not the representative of the universal clergy, but of certain monastic bodies, or of chapters of canons, with the complete monastic stamp upon them. These bodies acquired, little by little, territorial wealth and importance; so did the Bishops; thence came Prince Bishops, and thence mitred Abbots. A somewhat similar course of events developed the western Patriarchate into the complex idea of temporal and spiritual sovereignty comprised in the term *Papacy*. And here we find ourselves in the midst of the Middle Age.

The close Chapters, as succeeding to the diocesan clergy, still claimed the election of the Bishops. But these Chapters were, if truth be spoken, exclusive corporations, without sufficient prestige to maintain them. For instance, in London the Chapter of St. Paul's elected their Bishop, and the equally important Chapter of Westminster had no more voice in the choice than the watermen on the Thames—while the parochial clergy were absolutely unthought of. In making this statement I do not forget the shade of a representation of the diocese, comprised in the prebends. I merely allude to them to show that I have not forgotten them, feeling that they do not really tell against my argument. The natural result followed.

Strong as these Chapters were, they wanted the plenitude of moral weight; and stronger powers stepped in to supersede them in their right of choosing men who were to be at once the depositaries of the highest spiritual prerogatives, and the possessors of the amplest worldly power—chief pastors of souls, and wholesale lords of manors. These powers were the King and the Pope—the feudal suzerain, and the western patriarch whom events had so aggrandised. Thenceforward the ecclesiastical history of the Middle Ages present a melancholy record of kings, popes, and chapters contending for the nomination of that bishop whom the last-named competitor had always to go through the form of electing. Sometimes one prevailed, sometimes another; the great mass of the parochial clergy, in the meanwhile, looking on in uninterested apathy. This evil developed further ones; thus the bishop no longer even represented the chapter, but, assuming baronial state, he often fixed his residence in some castle or manor-house far away from his cathedral church, which thenceforward differed in nothing but name from any other abbey. This corruption, odd to say, has been consolidated and aggravated by some of our recent so-called ecclesiastical reforms in England. At length came the reign of *the* "Head of the Church," Henry VIII., who made good his assumption of that title by stifling at one blow Pope and Chapter, and constituting the Crown effectual nominator of Bishops. I do not pretend to trace the course of events on the Continent; it is sufficient to say that for the most part the old contest between Pope and King has ever since continued there. But still various circumstances tended to preserve for the Church of England some free voice. In the first place must be named the Convocation. This, however, was silenced at the beginning of the last century, because it had the audacity to think of calling to account Bishop Hoadley, a man of confessedly unsound, if not Socinian, opinions. In the second was the process of confirmation by the Metropolitan, which had, some time after the Hoadley affair, sufficient terror to induce the Minister of the day to give to Dr. Rundell, a heterodox favorite of the then influential party, a bishopric in Ireland (where all form of canonical election has perished) in lieu of Gloucester, for which he had been designed. This process has, within the last three years, in the "Hampden case," been practically rendered a nullity, owing to the want of moral courage of that upright man, but unlearned theologian, the late Lord Chief Justice, on the *confessed* ground of that most fallacious notion of keeping peace by means of the compromise of strict principle.

Concurrently with these changes, the episcopal nominations have become, more and more, merely Ministerial appointments, in the absolute gift of the Premier, instead of being, as up to a somewhat late date they were, beyond the autocratic nomination of the elected of the majority of the House of Commons—that House of Commons being now constituted, religiously speaking, as I leave Mr. Cobden to describe in more forcible language than I can command.

Former letters of mine have pointed out the inevitable consequences of this selfish system—one of the most palpable of which is the distance which cannot but exist, under any but extraordinary circumstances, between the clergy and him to whom they ought to look as their father. I do not for one instant suppose that the primitive system could be absolutely restored. Such a notion is purely chimerical. The forms of modern civilization, the system of modern governments, the growth of the parochial system, all render it impossible. But there are still elements of truth in that system which might be incorporated into our actual one without dislocating it—elements which cannot be brought into shape until the Church of England recovers her powers of synodical action; but which, when shaped, will, I feel convinced, combine in a system far more conducive to the true dignity of the Crown, the true liberty of the subject, Dissenter as well as Churchman, and the true well-being of the Church, than the present complication of cumbrous and barren privilege, concurring with an actual paralysis of power for real and effective action in the one especial vocation of the Christian Church—the salvation of souls.

After the evil of the nomination of bishops without any reference to their flocks had thus prevailed for ages, those disestablished offshoots of the Church of England which are to be found in Scotland and in the United States of America, were driven by the necessities of their case into the opposite extreme; and they adopted—the one, the principle of election by the entire clergy of the diocese, to the fullest extent—and the other, the election by all the clergy, together with representatives of the laity. But, as was natural, one extreme being avoided, the other was embraced, and, by an unhappy compensation of evils, these bishops found themselves destitute of any chapter or any cathedral; they were bishops in office, but in position parochial clergy—each the incumbent of a parish, and in that position as much himself subject to all petty parochial persecutions as any of his dependent clergy

who might seek his advice under similar difficulties. Lamentable instances of this abnormal state of things have, within these few years, given great scandal.

I have, as you see, sir, been stating facts, not proposing remedies. It is very clear that neither the English, Scotch, nor American hierarchy—to confine the question to these—is nominated as it should be. Mere Ministerial nomination is palpably a failure. Diocesan election of decentralised prelates, with hardly any Conservative check, is liable to great misuse. Still the Christian Church cannot go on without bishops; and when once a bishop is consecrated to his see, while the form of his election becomes, and ought to become, a matter of importance in all matters of extra-canonical exercise of powers—it cannot be brought in question in those which are strictly canonical. I do not for one instant contemplate any sweeping change in the system as its exists amongst us; but I do want to point out how that system is only the accidental and extra-statutable growth of many conflicting causes, and subject, like all other matters of human accident, to revision and reform—providing the revision and the reform are undertaken by bodies legitimately competent to the work. All other professions have been reformed. Formerly a Lord Chancellor might be appointed, like Sir Christopher Hatton, because he danced well—now the notion is almost too ludicrous to be believed. Formerly the scions of royalty were, as a matter of course, sent in command of armies—now the notion would be scouted, unless the individual prince showed capacity equal to the undertaking. At the present day, the opinion of lawyers creates the eligibility to the Chancellorship—the opinion of the army points out the rising officer. In the Church alone, the question of capacity is solved by an external—it may be an ignorant—it may be an unfriendly arbiter. Is there common sense in this? Does the connexion of Church and State depend upon the maintenance of this principle of selection in all its overgrown proportions?

But the question is so ample, that I must defer the application to present circumstances of what I have said, to another letter.

XX.

THE BISHOP OF MANCHESTER'S REJOINDER.

FEB. 6, 1851.

THE *Manchester Guardian* of Saturday last contains a leading article headed "The Bishop of Manchester and Broughton Church," in which that paper shows itself not a little excited by my having attributed to it an article which, it seems, really appeared in a journal of similar politics—the *Manchester Spectator*. The article itself, which professes to demolish "a few of the more important" of my "misrepresentations and mistatements," is, it appears, not to be confounded with the usual run of such productions; for, says the writer, "We shall not do so merely upon our own knowledge, but wish it to be distinctly understood that for every statement we make in reply to the assertions of 'D. C. L.,' we have the authority of the right reverend prelate himself." I own to being a little staggered by this fearful prelude. How to deal with a bishop I know. The idea I wish to cherish of a bishop is that of his being, more than most men, a Christian, a gentleman, and a scholar. Opposition to a bishop, even when necessary, has a tone and a manner in it called forth by the quality of one's opponent, and is not a thing to be hastily taken up. On the other hand, controversy with a newspaper has its characteristics. It need not, for instance, be quite so deferential in its language as when one's controversy is with a right reverend lord. But the novel spectacle of a fusion of the bishop and the leading article, with which this passage presents me, is somewhat perplexing. It is so hard to ascertain whether the editor is donning the mitre to weight his sarcasm, or whether the father of the flock chooses to offer words of exhortation to the faithful through the columns of a leader. My best course will be, it seems to me, to conclude that the Bishop is the animating spirit of the whole tirade. Before I go further, I must observe that my misnomer of the paper arose from the very simple circumstance of my having a slip of the article before me, without the name of the paper on it, and having accordingly confounded that name. I cheerfully make the Bishop a present of all the advantage he may gain from this confession. His lordship, or the paper, states that the initials D. C. L. "are said to conceal a certain Puseyite or pervert lawyer." It is not very clear whether the *or* is meant to be partitive or not; but, in any case, the charge of my being a "pervert" is a

simple invention. I shall not pause to point out the self-evident fact that this charge is one of deliberate and manifold falsehood against a writer whose key-note is the Church of England; or to moralise on the tone of the last sentence of the article as to where "truth is most certainly not to be found."

The Episcopal leading article characterises the success with which I attempt to make out a case against the right reverend lord about the Additional Curates' Society as "small." Since, however, it is satisfied with its own assertion, I am contented to leave my facts to themselves—being, however, perfectly ready, if it will be the slightest pleasure to his lordship, to give the fullest narrative of the whole affair, drawn from the pamphlet which he printed at the end of 1849, containing the entire correspondence.

With a generous forbearance, however, his lordship, or the editor, promises only to expose and contradict at present a few of the "more important misrepresentations and misstatements" of my letter. I shall have, in the course of this letter, to point out *what* facts of mine are *not* exposed and contradicted, which must, therefore, either be true, or be, in the eyes of a Christian Bishop, unimportant.

The first exposure which I have incurred, is that of the libellous statement, that the Bishop rented a pew in Broughton Church, not being able to procure one in his parish church. Here I find I am grossly in error; for, by "the authority of the right reverend prelate himself," the *Manchester Guardian* tells us, "that the Bishop never rented a pew in Broughton Church, but has always had one in Prestwich Church, more than two miles distant."

I acknowledge my mistake; and I beg to assure his lordship that I will not any more conclude that he had the excuse which I have hitherto made for him, for having gone on so long as he had done, winking at what he now considers so "hopeful for Rome," in a church where he has worshipped, and where he has officiated by preference. My supposition was, that finding that he could not so conveniently get a seat anywhere else, he took up with Broughton, and, charitably, also with what he found there. The fact turns out to be, that his selection of that church was as gratuitous as is Lord Ashley's *penchant* for worshipping in the Chapel Royal.

My next delinquency is thus summed up by "authority":—

"We are authorised to state that so far from Lord John Russell's letter having anything to do with the Bishop of Manchester's notice of the arrangements in the chancel of Broughton Church, the Bishop did not notice them, or visit the chancel, until specially requested to do so by the

minister, the churchwardens, and the trustees of the church, for the purpose of arranging the seats within the chancel. He then went, not 'unexpectedly,' as D. C. L. asserts, but at a time agreed upon with these parties, who met his lordship there by appointment."

His lordship, it seems, was called on to settle the seats in the chancel, and then, for the first time, he noticed the arrangements there—Mr. Clowes's tomb, I conclude, and the M., and the sedilia, the "almorie," and the piscina. No doubt his lordship's devotion is so great that, often as he may have officiated there, he never did notice them. But how does the Bishop dispose of the following statement of Messrs. Atkinson and Dodgshon, which I must repeat:—

"He has also officiated at other times, and on these occasions his lordship has been seated in a chair on the north side of the chancel (almost close to Mr. Clowes's tomb), while the other clergy present have invariably made use of the sedilia. Until recently the Bishop has never made any complaint, except on one occasion last year, when he objected to the tile mentioned above; but this was from a motive which we cannot but admire and respect. His lordship thought the sacred symbols, from the position of the tile, were in danger of being trampled on, but appeared to be satisfied with the explanation which was then given. Not the least allusion or objection was made to the letter M.

"When we contrast the facts of the case with the statement of the Bishop, we are lost in amazement. That his lordship should still persist in his views increases (if possible) our amazement, when we know that the above facts have been laid before him some time since."

Solvitur ambulando, as they say in the schools. He simply ignores it; so does his mouthpiece; for on this part of the question we enjoy the great advantage of reading the case both in the words of Bishop Lee himself and of the chosen depositary of his opinions.

His lordship, in the first person,* thus answers the letter of the churchwardens which I have quoted:—

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* The result of these letters of mine has been to compel the publication in total of this letter, which Messrs. Atkinson and Dodgshon had hitherto, "out of respect," as they word it, for his lordship's "high and holy office," kept private, although his lordship had for his part given a copy of it to the Archdeacon to show to the clergy. Prepared as one might be for much from the extracts—the entire composition, taken as a whole, is astonishing. I will not attempt—for no words of mine can give the faintest idea of the whole letter—to depict the tone of sneer running through the address of a chief pastor to the members of his flock. One portion I must, however, quote. In the second paragraph the Bishop observes that—"The chivalrous self-devotion with which you rush to the defence of your late incumbent, who was not even by implication alluded to in my reply to the Blackburn clergy, is admirable; it is only to be surpassed by the modesty, tempered no doubt with prudence, which led you, 'of yourselves,' to 'say nothing.'"

"With respect to the decorations of the chancel of St. John's, Broughton, it might be sufficient to state they are *exactly* described in Pugin's 'Ecclesiastical Architecture,' now before me, in his directions for building Roman Catholic Churches, and many of them, among the rest the M. for the Virgin's emblem, almost exactly figured in his 'Glossary.' The altar tomb is expressly described, as mentioned by me, as is also the almorie. I have verified every statement made by me. You state I have several times officiated in the chancel, and even administered the Sacrament there. This is true; and, as I came to worship, not to act as spy, you 'cannot refrain from remarking, that my objections, if I had any, never assumed a public form until after the publication of Lord John Russell's letter to the Bishop of Durham.' I thank you for the insinuation attempted to be conveyed. You *know*, however, that I did not examine into, or notice these things, until requested officially to inspect the chancel by your incumbent and churchwardens, with a view to allotting the seats within it."

In the third person, the Bishop of Manchester replies with the following statement:—

"This writer artfully glosses over the fact of the crowned figure of the Virgin in the stained glass window. We may add, on this point, that the Roman Catholic artist, Mr. Hardman, of Birmingham, who was employed to put up the window, on being applied to lately to remove the crown from the head of the Virgin Mary, declined to be employed, on the ground of his religious scruples. The altar-tomb, with the hollow in it for the crucifix, from Good Friday to Easter, is expressly described by Pugin in his 'Ecclesiastical Architecture;' and with his directions for building Roman Catholic Churches the whole of the chancel of Broughton Church exactly corresponds. That hollow in the altar-tomb was used till very lately as the credence table for holding the elements prior to consecration. With respect to the decorated tiles, the 'M.' complained of is almost exactly copied from one in Pugin's 'Glossary.' We may add, that when the Bishop visited the church to officiate, a chair was always provided for his lordship, and from the position in which he sat, one portion of the objectionable tiles was out of sight, and a portion was covered by matting. We are authorised to state that the piscina and shelf have already been removed, other alterations undertaken, and that designs for new tiles have been submitted to the Bishop for approval. We may add that, since the visit referred to, the Bishop has discovered that the communion table in Broughton Church is of stone, concealed by a crimson covering, and with wooden feet, so as to give the impression of the whole being of wood, and that that stone was put up the very year

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Messrs. Atkinson and Dodgshon, in their explanatory statement inserted in the *Manchester Courier*, observe—"We therefore proceed with the second paragraph, in which the Bishop states that our 'late incumbent was not even by implication alluded to' in his reply to the Blackburn clergy. The Bishop's visitation to the Broughton Chancel occurred on the 13th of Nov., and his reply to the address of the Blackburn clergy was dated Dec. 5th. After what has transpired we leave others to judge whether we had not reason for concluding that the Bishop referred to the late Mr. Bayne on the above occasion."

after the judgment of Sir Herbert Jenner Fust was given in the case Faulkner *v.* Lichfield, in which stone altars were expressly condemned."

It is needless to tell you that the question is not whether Pugin's "Ecclesiastical Architecture" *exactly* describes this or that fitting in Broughton Church, but whether this or that fitting is consistent with the worship of the Church of England. The Bishop of Manchester's criterion would banish pulpits and fonts, steeples and bells. But his lordship comes to particulars, and communicates the startling fact that, among the decorations of the chancel at Broughton, "*exactly* described" in Pugin's "Ecclesiastial Architecture" (published some years before it was built), is "the M for the Virgin's emblem, almost exactly figured in his Glossary." These are, doubtless, grave accusations and suspicious circumstances :—an emblem —and that emblem, too, found in a "Glossary"—and an exact description of Broughton chancel by that Papist whose help our gracious Queen has allowed in decorating that House of Lords in which the Bishop of Manchester says he sits, not to defend the Church, but to advise her Majesty—and, to wind up all, "the M." I can conceive his lordship addressing Messrs. Atkinson and Dodgshon in the words of an eminent reformer of other days—"It will be proved to thy face, that thou hast men about thee that usually talk of a noun and a verb, and such abominable words as no Christian ever can endure to hear."

For the benefit of those who may never have dived into the dangerous depths of the Glossary, I may observe that it contains designs for every conceivable way of writing letters in Gothic character—among them (his lordship is welcome to this admission) of M, as the first letter of Maria. But M, when it stands for *Maria*, is simply M, neither more nor less so than when it stands for *Manchester*. It so happened that the M in question, at Broughton, signified neither *Maria* nor *Manchester*, but *mille*, the Latin for 1,000. The date of the chancel had to be given, and good taste dictated that it should be included in one tile. Accordingly, by that commonest of devices, a monogram, the M—a letter, in its Gothic shape, eminently adapted to fill a square—was made to include the other letters which made up the date 1846; and, to give a second quotation from the same prototype of the "authority" of the *Manchester Guardian*, his lordship exclaimed, "Away with him, away with him; he speaks Latin." It is a simple matter of course, that if his lordship should ever happen to wish to commemorate *his* initials in Gothic characters, any

approximation to any M ever figured by Pugin will be strictly prohibited. I refrain from giving his lordship uneasiness by the remark, that whenever he *prints* his name, he uses that form of M which stands for Maria in every church which has been built in Italy for the last three centuries; and whenever he signs his name, he uses that M with which Cardinal Wiseman would have inscribed the first letter of Maria. I leave the *Manchester Guardian* and the churchwardens to settle the trifling discrepancy of the tiles being hidden, and of his lordship having looked at them and pronounced an opinion about them.*

I come now to the "altar-tomb" and the "almorie." The altar-tomb is, it seems, "*exactly* described" by Pugin, "as mentioned" by the Bishop. First, I must congratulate the prelate on his felicitous choice of the word "*mentioned*." Had he *described* the tomb in question, and not *mentioned* it, he must have described a tomb not intended to hold the crucifix at Easter, but the remains of Mr. Clowes at all times and seasons. I will help his lordship to make out his case. I conclude that what he intended, but failed, to express was, that the tomb of Mr. Clowes was similar to that tomb "*exactly* described" by Pugin as intended to hold the crucifix at Easter. Pugin's works happen to be accessible to others besides the "authority" of the *Manchester Guardian*, and I have referred to those *exact* descriptions which the right reverend journalist has so diligently "verified." Will it be readily credited, that Pugin neither "*exactly*" nor vaguely describes any tomb with a hollow in it for the crucifix from Good Friday to Easter—and for a very good reason, that there never was any such tomb to describe. He describes exactly enough a tomb which was used in the *ante*-Reformational Church to deposit the consecrated host in from Good Friday to Easter; but it is not for a moment to be conceived that the newspaper which has been so severe upon me for mistaking the *Manchester Spectator* for the *Manchester Guardian* will fail to direct its just invective upon a Bishop who, having referred to Roman Catholic writings to build upon them a charge of disloyalty against a deceased clergyman, turns out, after all, to have looked with such carelessness at those passages about which he so confidently blusters as to

* Messrs. Minton and Co., the manufacturers of this tile, have written to say that they were not aware that this pattern of M occurred in Pugin's Glossary. It seems they took it straight from an old example in our ancient ecclesiastical structures—and so must Mr. Pugin have done.

make so great an error. The truth is, that the Bishop of Manchester must, if he has ever really looked into books of ecclesiastical antiquities, know that it was an ancient custom to bury the founder or chief benefactor of any church in the side wall of the chancel, as a mark of respect to his memory. Such a benefactor was Mr. Clowes; and accordingly this most innocent custom was resorted to in his honour, as a preferable plan to blocking up some window of the church with a marble hoarding, bearing an urn, a naked cupid, a half-naked genius, bulls' heads, wreaths, and other emblems of the mummeries of superstition of the Pagan (not Papal—this is a palliative) Romans. I repeat it, the Bishop must have known this; but it did not suit his purpose to own it, and the fact was accordingly suppressed. If he does not believe me, I advise him to go to Canterbury Cathedral, where he will see a monument (a cenotaph, too) lately put up to the venerated Archbishop Howley, in a similar position.

I cannot quit this topic without an observation in passing on the logic of the *Guardian* (whether logic, as well as facts, come from "authority," I leave to those skilled in parallelism of style to investigate). That tomb, the paper informs us, was till lately used as the credence table for holding the elements previous to consecration. I suppose these *must* be put somewhere till the time when the Rubric orders them to be put upon the Lord's table; and it is not absurd to conclude that any raised space would be more convenient than the floor of the church. But to let this pass—the tomb was used till lately as the credence table, and therefore the paper, and its authority, would leave us to conclude it was employed to hold the crucifix from Good Friday till Easter.

We have now arrived at the mysterious "*almorie*"—"for such as come to pray for the souls of the departed," as the Bishop told the clergy of Blackburn—"*exactly described,*" as he now informs the churchwardens, "in Pugin's Ecclesiastical Architecture." Can I venture, in the face of the Bishop, to give Pugin's *real exact* description?—"Adjoining the chancel, a sacristy, or revestry, for keeping the vestments and ornaments; or, in *any small churches, an almery may be provided for this purpose on the gospel side of the chancel, within the chancel.*" The truth, then, is, that this almery (not almorie, as the Bishop writes it) has nothing to do with the souls of the departed, but is simply a cupboard or press for the dresses of the living, and for the vessels needed for service. It is in fact, that very same word which, in its

French form of *armoire*,* is so innocently used for a very common, and not, I believe, unorthodox article of furniture in everybody's dressing-room. The truth must be (incredible as such a truth is when fathered upon an eminent scholar, such as one used to hear Dr. Lee called), that his lordship, finding that the first three letters of almery were A L M, jumped to the conclusion that it must have something to do with *alms* (which any boy in the lower form at Birmingham might teach him was derived from *eleemosyna*); and seeing an alms-box, with a slit to let money through in its lid, in the chancel of Broughton, he decided on the nonce that this was an almorie—perhaps, too, he had some misty notion of the Almonry at Westminster in his head—and, having settled that it was an almorie, in some day-dream conjured up a dissolving view of the souls of the departed, and read, with eyes denied to any other man, an "*exact* description" of this almorie, for such as come to pray for the souls of the departed, in Pugin's Ecclesiastical Architecture.

The *Guardian*, or its authority, accuses me of artfully glossing over the fact of the crowned figure of the Virgin in the stained glass window. What his theory of glossing over may be, I may have my suspicions about; but as to the present alleged instance of it on my part, I simply refer to your columns, where I expressly draw attention to "the figure in question," with the additional fact that the Bishop expressed his wish that boys might throw stones through it. How comes it that the right reverend "authority" glosses over this statement of mine? I am much obliged to him for the fact respecting Mr. Hardman, proving, as it does, that, so far from the authorities of the Church being responsible for the crown in question, they had themselves endeavoured to persuade its artist (the same artist, by the way, who has provided the House of Lords with its gorgeous gates) to remove it. This he refused, with, I doubt not, the same notion that he was acting conscientiously, as the Bishop felt, when he desired that "some well-directed pebble" might make short work of it.

One more topic alone remains to be considered—the assertion—no doubt, from "authority"—that the Lord's table, being of stone with wooden legs, is illegal by Sir H. J. Fust's judgment in the case Faulkner *v.* Lichfield. Is it not a little surprising that the Bishop of Manchester labours

* Armory, I have since heard, is the common term for the cupboard in the cottages of Scotland.

under a positive inability to be accurate on any point of ecclesiastical lore which he ventures to handle? By this judgment, neither stone tables with wooden legs, nor wooden tables with stone legs, are, *as such*, pronounced illegal. What the judgment does touch are *immovable* Lord's tables—stone, as a material, being demurred to from the immobility of that substance. I give the *exact* words of the judgment:—

> "No one would suppose the term 'table' to mean an article formed of slabs of stone, fixed or imbedded in mortar or concrete. My opinion, therefore, is, that, according to the true construction of the Rubric, this is not a communion table within the intent and meaning of the Rubric, which meant a wooden table, capable of being removed, and not an immovable stone table."

The Bishop, as you see, "artfully glosses" over the question of whether this *wooden table*, within the scope of the judgment (for it would be no easy task to prove it not to be such, whatever its top slab be made of), is or is not immovable.

I have now, sir, exhausted the catalogue of what the Bishop is pleased to consider a few of my "more important misrepresentations and misstatements." Among them, as you will observe, there is not the slightest allusion to the points I detail, or refrain from detailing, in the last paragraph but one of my letter—not a syllable about "the violence of words and violence of action," which, as I say, I omit, rather than run the risk of "*misstatment and misrepresentation*." I trust, sir, you observe the source from which the episcopal leading article has drawn its phraseology—a proof, it might be thought, that the silence with which this paragraph is treated is not from its having been overlooked by the right reverend "authority" of the journal. There is not the most passing allusion to the charge I make, of the Bishop having spoken contemptuously of the deceased clergyman as St. Bayne, and in the first instance ordered the altar screen, which had been put up as his monument, to be thrown down. If these things were misstatements and misrepresentations—if they were not facts—it is not to be conceived that an Englishman and a Bishop, when supplying a paper with facts to demolish me in a leading article, would not have offered the most indignant denial of the assertions. He has offered no denial, indignant or faint; he has absolutely slurred over this entire portion of my letter, and yet dares to conclude with remarks on what he calls my "case."

I am, therefore, driven to the irresistible conclusion, that,

on these points, I was quite correctly informed. I will not, therefore, add anything to what I said in my former communication upon this head. Most sincerely do I trust, that, when his lordship read this portion of my letter his feelings were—

"Pudet hæc opprobria nobis
Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli."

XXI.

THE LATE MEETING OF CONVOCATION.

FEB. 7, 1851.

A PORTION of one of the many columns of your paper of this morning registers another epoch in the history of the Church of England—the commencement, the course, and the conclusion of a session of the Ecclesiastical Legislature, at a conjuncture not inferior in interest to any through which she has ever passed since the consummation of the Reformation. On Wednesday, at noon, a few gentlemen dropped into the Jerusalem Chamber, chatted a little (so I hear), read two or three documents, and then walked out again to the many occupations which they might have chalked out for themselves as the work of that day. And this was a Session of the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury! This was the crowning "meeting" of the professed religious meetings of the last six months—the practical way in which the Archbishop of Canterbury, in Westminster, meets the "Archbishop of Westminster" and his threatened synod—not, indeed, that I would have had it meet for that, and leave untouched the practical evils of the Church of England. It is difficult not to take the matter in its purely ludicrous aspect. But ludicrous as it may be to one who can afford to be a philosophical bystander, it is a fact that betokens the presence of deep inward disorganization—it is a ceremony which never could have taken place, with similar concurrences, were there not a fearful accumulation of unsoundness to prop it up. It reminds one of nothing so much as of the Senate, the Consuls, and all those old traditionary forms which had produced a Fabius and a Scipio, still dragging on through the degenerate days of the Roman Empire.

But in one respect the parallel is not a complete one.

The present attitude of Convocation has—which the Roman Senate had not—its bright side. The latter was allowed to linger on, in order to confer the semblance of a constitutional title upon the successors of Augustus, who durst not, till Diocletian (so long did republican prejudice simmer on), assume the *literal* crown. It is a different thing when the imperial power permits the shadow of the legislature of an *imperium in imperio* to haunt the scene of its former labours. *This* indicates some life—some power—in it. It is also true, paradoxical as the assertion may at first sight seem, that the uselessness of the actual Convocation, as compared with the Senate, is likewise, in its way, hopeful. The Senate, still aping the attitude of its bygone power, was ridiculous enough—but it had in some sort an employment, and a practical one, too. These cumbrous externals enshrouded a municipality, which still, as a fact, attended to the police of Rome, its paving, lighting, and so forth, and made, I doubt not, a very respectable common council. Convocation has not the merest routine work of the Church to perform. Then why does it still meet at all? Because its abolition would be too daring an invasion of the integrity of our Church for any minister willingly to attempt it. A dexterous and unscrupulous man found an opportunity to prorogue it surreptitiously, upon a pretext which had shaped itself; concurrent circumstances, and increasing apathy on the part of those Churchmen of the last century who seemed to think that orthodoxy was an apology for the want of any other Christian grace, combined to give permanence to this prorogation. But once endeavour to sweep it formally away by Act of Parliament—and all the grievances of the Church, all the unsatisfactoriness of her position, all the encroachments of the civil power upon the reformational "concordat" are dragged to light; and the measure could only be carried, if carried at all (which I will not admit), after a contest more damaging to the victors than to the vanquished party.

The very particulars which have transpired in your columns, and those which I have been enabled to gather from one who was present at the meeting, are facts indicative of the beginning of the end of this mere illusory assemblage of our Church legislature, the very existence of which was till lately a matter of erudition to those who knew it at all. Melancholy as is the record which you give of the *session*, it is at least a gain that the daily papers record it at all. Moreover, the Archbishop appeared in his "Convocation Robes" of scarlet (the only dress in which a Bishop can properly

attend); at the preceding meeting he walked there in his coat, umbrella in hand. Grievous as is the fact that its proceedings were confined to receiving one single petition, yet that one petition was a petition to a constitutional body, and that constitutional body formally received it. It needs no prophet to say that, at the next meeting, it will not be a solitary petition which will disturb the calm dignity of the Lord Primate, and tax his constitutional lore. However this may be, it is certain that the experience of the Queen's Advocate,

"Full of wise saws and modern instances,"

was absolutely staggered at so daring an innovation on the present occasion. But it was not the matured erudition of the Queen's Advocate that carried the day, and the petition was received. In the interim the Lower House found themselves turned into another room, as, after the Queen's Speech, the House of Commons finds itself dismissed. In this room, unlike the one in which the Commons meet, there was a fire, and there were only two chairs for the whole house to sit upon. Accordingly, that dignified House of Legislature thought it better to stand around the fire than to scramble for the chairs; and so, in that *degagé* position, various questions were raised, none of which were solved. The Prolocutor (the co-relative in the Church of that awful reality, "Mr. Speaker," in the State, and, like the Speaker, existing from dissolution to dissolution), did not know whether the Lower House was constituted or not. He did not know whether he could receive the petition (which was presented to both Houses), and he would not carry a message to the Upper House soliciting information on the points which they were themselves incompetent to decide. In the midst of the confusion the Lower House is summoned to the Upper one. To their astonishment, they find that, while they have been talking, the Upper House have been doing some business. They procure, by an act of desperate resolve, license to act, and they receive the petition, the Prolocutor formally taking possession of one of the two chairs. The petition is barely received, when another summons is sent, and Convocation is prorogued till the 28th of August. Thus, a session of Parliament commencing, which will, not improbably, be concerned with questions deeply important to the Church of England, the Primate of that Church postpones *her* legislature (the legislature, that is, of the ruling province), till a day selected of *disposition prepense*, to come after the termi-

nation of the Parliamentary Session! How long can such an insult to common sense continue? Formerly, too, Convocation was advertised in the *London Gazette*. Now it is no longer so. Nay, incredible to say, the Registrar-General of the province of Canterbury—the dignitary occupying in Convocation a similar place to the clerk of Parliaments—did not know the hour at which it was to meet, and an intimation had crept out that the members of the body were not expected to attend.

All this trifling is the result of the violence consequent upon the Ministerial encouragement of Hoadley. But the attention paid to it is the result of the awakened spirit of the Church in our days. With a cry for emancipation on all sides, it is impossible that the emancipation of the Church of England will be a solitary exception. Lord John Russell will, of course, never see that the Church of England needs such emancipation; but happily Lord John Russell is not the typical Englishman nor the ideal statesman of our times. A little longer we are bound to tolerate a pageant Convocation—a little longer, a Russell Administration; but there are things older and stronger than such Administrations and such pageants. The English people is a practical one, and so we may see the end of one thing—it is an honest people, and so we may see the end of another thing.

XXII.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL AND THE BISHOPS.

FEB. 10, 1851.

I HAVE heard it said of a somewhat eminent person, that his notion of mediation consisted in knocking both parties down. It seems to me that this, if any, must also have been the guiding principle of Lord John Russell's policy towards the rival episcopates of England and of Rome with reference to the recent aggression of the latter. I do not mean to follow the noble lord through the intricacies of his speech of Friday last. This speech had at least a major, a minor, and a conclusion. The major premise laid down that the Pope—a foreign and independent prince—and Cardinal Wiseman had committed high treason against the Queen of England, (the only intelligible inference to be drawn from the parallel of his supposed

Jacobite Lord-Lieutenant of Middlesex); and not only committed high treason against the Queen, but, as far at least as the Pope went, the equally unpardonable offence of rudeness to Lord John himself, by speaking out *Urbi et Orbi*, before he had whispered to his lordship, and by not pressing upon the bashful Lord Minto the perusal of that document, or even offering a translation of it—drawn, as it was, in crabbed Latin—which, after the diplomatist knew that it concerned England, he so coyly declined to look at. The minor premise was, that her Majesty's Attorney-General, when consulted upon the point, decided that, treasonable as was the deed, it could not be proved contrary to the actual laws; that, in short, Cardinal Wiseman, the parallel of a Jacobite office-holder, was all along a loyal subject of Queen Victoria. The conclusion was drawn that by an *ex post facto* enactment, this legal treason, this rebellious deference to the existing constitution, is to be made a misdemeanour. I might have my own opinions about the moral effect upon men and society of this atrocious trifling, this tossing too and fro, according to the momentary caprice, of the first principles of constitutional policy; but still the enunciation of them would not strictly come within the scope of these letters, were it not for certain statements made in the Premier's speech having direct reference to our bench of English Bishops.

The very first time I addressed you was with reference to the same parties—to Lord John and to the episcopate. I warned the latter that, in resting their cause, as against the Papal invasion, upon the temporal accidents, the state trappings of their office, and not upon their spiritual prerogatives, they were acting a part at once impolitic and unworthy; they were refusing to take up their only strong position—the only one which would stand them in present stead, and not fail them hereafter, when the aggression upon them was on the part of the Government, not of Rome, but of England—and they were not fulfilling their obligations to those sons of the Church of England who looked to their chief pastors to prove by their fruits that the Bishop of Rome's ignoring us as a Church was a fallacy and an arrogance. But the temptation was too strong, and with one or two, at the most three or four, exceptions, the bench of English Bishops have shown themselves very sensitive to the Royal prerogative, and not a little callous to their own spiritual means of opposing the aggression, and to the duties and the charities which it imposed upon them—*and they have had their reward from Lord John Russell.*

I did not, I confess, imagine that this reward would have been so speedy or so complete. Nothing was wanting to give it perfection except that the body of our prelates should have been seated on the bench opposite the self-appointed Vice-"Head" of the Established Church ("Eldon redivivus," as I have heard him named), to have learned from him at first hand the result of their policy during the last twelvemonth. First, with a delicate irony, the noble lord quotes two leading members of the bench to prove that what *he* proposes is just what is needed for the security and dignity of the English Church.

"The present bill, therefore, in the first place, aims at preventing the assumption of any titles, taken not only from any dioceses now existing, but from any territory or any place within any part of the United Kingdom. That provision is in conformity with a proposal which I saw was made in the answer of the Bishop of London to one of the addresses that was presented to him. He said he thought that not only ought we to prohibit the assumption of titles derived from existing sees, but that we ought to prohibit the assumption of titles derived from the United Kingdom. What I propose, therefore, agrees with that suggestion of his. And perhaps I may mention, that the Archbishop of Canterbury said, with respect to instituting a prosecution, 'I did not expect that the Government would institute a prosecution; but what I do expect is, that some legislation should take place on this subject.' I think therefore, in this respect, we prevent what I consider an insult to the Crown of this country—an interference with the rights of the Established Church and the independence of this nation."

Can anything be more satisfactory—can anything indicate a more conciliatory, a more generous disposition towards the Church of England? To be sure, Lord John forgot to add, that, when the Bishop of London made that suggestion, he accompanied it with a perfectly just observation that such restriction would, in all probability, be quite inoperative. But I can pardon the omission for the *animus* of the passage. But pause a little—read a few lines further on. It will be remembered that, after the judgment of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council on the Gorham case, it was expected that our bishops would fortify the hearts of Churchmen by some explicit declaration on the doctrine of baptism. This expectation was frustrated; but, as some protest against the judgment—as some step towards Church reform, the Bishop of London, representing his brethren, brought in a bill for establishing a new court of appeal in ecclesiastical matters of a most harmless character. This measure was stifled in its birth by the agency of the government. It would not require a very sanguine optimist to conclude of any other

minister that the change in our ecclesiastical relations created by the aggression might have led the chief adviser of the Crown to reconsider the opinion he then came to, and to endeavour, if he really meant to oppose the Roman Catholic Episcopate, to give the English Hierarchy the not exorbitant support of showing that he trusted in their possession of common honesty and common sense—particularly as his chief wish is, and has ever been, to keep their nomination under his own thumb. But, with regard to Lord John Russell, such an anticipation is very sanguine, not to say Quixotic, optimism. Not many minutes after he had brought in the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London as the make-weights of that "trifle light as air," his bill, the noble lord, with the bland and playful superiority to all things celestial and terrestrial for which he is distinguished, informed the House of Commons—

"I am for the fullest enjoyment of religious liberty. But I am entirely opposed to any interference on the part of ecclesiastics with the temporal supremacy of the realm. For, whenever I have seen in my own Church a disposition to assume powers which I thought were inconsistent with that temporal supremacy which belonged to the State, I have not been slow in urging myself, and in inducing others to urge, strong and prevailing objections to that attempt. I may, perhaps, say, that in the course of the very last year, when a proposal was made, plausible in itself, to give to the Bishops of the English Church a power which I thought would give them a control over the temporal existence and well-being and property of the clergymen of the Church, that that proposal, because I saw in it this dangerous principle, was successfully resisted by my colleagues in the place where it was proposed."

The Bishops have got their reward! They are brought in as prime advisers of that juggle, so unworthy to the Minister, and they are told that they are not competent to sit as a court of appeal in ecclesiastical matters, lest the permission should emperil "the temporal existence, the well-being, and the property" of the clergy.

XXIII.

LORD ASHLEY IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FEB. 13, 1851.

IT has been my duty—not a pleasurable one, I can assure you, though a necessary one—to call your attention more

than once to the proceedings of a noble lord whose energies and talents have unfortunately been enlisted in a cause destructive, as I have endeavoured to show, to the true cause of the Church of England. I refer to Lord Ashley. In a speech which he delivered last night upon the Papal Aggression, he took advantage of the opportunity to bring in, as the concluding and telling portion of his speech, that topic which is as much capital to those who trade in the aggression as the aggression itself is capital to the general politician—the proceedings, I mean, of the "large party." Everything which falls from Lord Ashley on this subject has a peculiar value at present, considered as explanatory of those intentions, which were significantly, but not expressly, put forth at the meeting of the 5th of December, and which were not unclearly stated in that paragraph of one of your morning contemporaries, which I called upon his lordship in a former letter to disown, but which he has never disowned. The strategy of the allusion in Lord Ashley's speech of last night was not a little remarkable. After he had discussed, with a praiseworthy adherence to the question, the subject-matter of the night's debate—with all that dignity of manner, that measured gesticulation, and that array of papers upon the red box, which he so well knows how to manage—the sonorous voice was lowered; another view of the aggression was announced; and the attention of the house was rivetted. In one minute, upon the flimsy pretext of the encouragement said to have been given by "unworthy sons of the Church of England" (I must, in explanation, say that Lord Ashley did not use *these* words) to the proceedings of the Pope, the House found itself deep in a lecture upon "Tractarianism." Three principal topics distinguished this discourse. The first was the slow and significant reading of an extract from a high authority, as Lord Ashley made him out to be, describing in glowing language the Romeward tendencies of the "large party." The pauses were judiciously made; and if the House was not electrified by the awful disclosures, it was no fault of the reader; but, the document having been gone through, it was necessary to state its author. This author turned out to be that very impartially situated looker-on, Dr. Wiseman, and the date ten years ago—1841.

Pray observe the writer, and note the date. The writer was Dr. Wiseman—and not Dr. Wiseman, "Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster"—but Dr. Wiseman, not long after he had settled in England, when yet concerned in establishing his position in the island, and when everything was concur-

ring to lead him to make out a case in favour of his own side of the question. This case was made out by a judicious use of words—especially the words "Catholic union"—which mean, literally, grammatically, and truly, the universal harmony of all true Christians in a pure, and, therefore, undivided, Church—but which Dr. Wiseman of course desired should be taken as denoting absolute submission to the banner of the Papal supremacy. The answer is brief and positive—that the views to which Dr. Wiseman then alluded as likely to lead to the latter result, have not, except in some individual instances, had that result, and that they have had the effect of developing a large and always increasing party in and of the Church of England, who are zealously determined, through good report and through evil report, with singleness of heart, calmness of temper, and unswerving determination of purpose, to uphold the faith and the practice of the Book of Common Prayer.

By what I must believe to be a strong self-delusion, Lord Ashley quotes the words referred to as those of a "great authority"—the first time, I should conclude, that a Roman Catholic has ever been, in his eyes, a great authority for anything connected with the Church of England. Nay, not only so—they are not only in themselves the testimony of a great authority—but they are also such because "these are not the words of some low Churchman attached to Genevan principles, and writing in the spirit of bitterness." I thank his lordship for this admission. A low Churchman, attached to Genevan principles, and writing in the spirit of bitterness, is, on the testimony of Lord Ashley, no trustworthy evidence as to the views and tendencies of the "large party."

But I have been loitering too long upon the first of the three points into which, as I have said, this attack divided itself.

We were told next that "it would be remembered that last year there was published a declaration, signed by 1,800 clergymen, against the Royal supremacy. He did not doubt that those who signed that document were conscientious in the opinions which they professed. Nevertheless, the leading effect of it was this, that the Royal supremacy, which had been recognised for 300 years, was first called in question and disputed. This must have been matter of congratulation and of hope to Rome."

I fully believe Lord Ashley's utter incapability of deliberately making a mis-statement. To one who believes this, the passage which I have just quoted is a most remarkable

evidence of the power which party bias possesses of distorting the sight of those who may fancy themselves seeing most straightly and most clearly. So little does the document in question deny, either in effect or in intention, the Royal supremacy, or any other thing which has been held for 300 or for thrice 300 years, that its absolute intention and effect are to give that rational and sufficient explanation of the Royal supremacy on which alone it is possible that, in these days of reason and argument, it can be accepted. This declaration lays down that the Royal supremacy extends over temporal matters, and over "the temporal accidents of spiritual things." What more can be needed? What is the function of sovereignty but the maintenance of temporal rule? Most fully and to the utmost does the declaration recognise this definition, for it not only completely accepts the Sovereign's prerogative in things temporal, but it likewise searches out the temporal accidents which may be found attaching to matters spiritual, in order to place them also under the superintendence of the Crown. But I need hardly dilate upon this topic, having devoted the whole of a former letter to its consideration. Does Lord Ashley himself attribute more to the Crown? I cannot imagine it. He may fancy he does; but if he does not only fancy it, but actually believe it, then he gives to her Majesty the prerogative of altering the creed of the Christian Church, and of forcing him to accept the alteration. Let him, then, acknowledge that he does believe that the Queen has this power, or let him retract his assertion that the declaration "must have been matter of hope and congratulation to Rome."

The third topic is the most serious; for the two former ones have been merely opinions of Lord Ashley's. The third, though clothed in the garb of a fear, wears very much the impression of a menace. After a highly-coloured description of what he conceives to be certain practices of the party whom he is labouring to discredit, his lordship continues, as if borrowing his key-note from the circular of the National Club—"When they considered all this, could they say that there was not within them something which invited the aggression of the Roman Pontiff? And if these things were allowed to continue, there would arise, and at no distant time, a collision between the ecclesiastics and the laity, the issue of which could not be doubtful to any reflecting mind."

I pray you to observe the cool assumption, common to the section represented by Lord Ashley and to the Voltaire school, that ecclesiastics and laity are naturally antagonistic

classes, and must always be plotting each other's downfall. This may serve to point a sentence, but, for the sake of social order, not to mention other considerations, it will, I trust, never be assumed to be a rule of practical action. Lord Ashley may easily—more easily than his cold temperament may calculate—hurry on a collision, but it will not be a collision in which all the laity will be on his side. For proof of this, I need go no further back than your paper of the day before yesterday, to the address of the working-classes of St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, to the Bishop of London. Rumour says that her Majesty's Ministers, participating in Lord Ashley's delusion, have it in contemplation to arm such of the laity as may be ill-advised enough to swallow the lure, against the order and discipline of the Church of England. I only give this as a report; but it is a report that has enough of probability to make it a matter not to be lightly overlooked. If they do so, they will simply succeed in producing as much pure mischief as any set of men, not absolutely escaped from Hanwell, could ever, by one act, have effected; and they will, after all, not attain their object—for they will not make the world believe them heroes, and they will not drive the men of whom they are afraid into the Church of Rome.

To Lord Ashley the "large party" replies, in the concluding words of his speech, that they would "maintain" the Church of England "in purity, and not in corruption. To obtain this end they would under God's blessing incur every hazard, try every alternative, and shrink from no consequences whatever, in their endeavours to bring back the Church that they love, still nearer and nearer to the standard of the glorious Reformation."

This standard, however, they are determined, under every hazard, to seek in the literally interpreted words of the Prayer Book, and not in the frothy declamations—at Exeter Hall, or Freemasons' Hall, or in the House of Commons—of any of the leaders of that party which has notoriously mutilated the services, despised the discipline, and strained the language of that precious volume, and which is prepared, if hard-pressed, rather than accept it as it is, and not as they will it to be, to league together to procure its alteration by Ministerial interference.

XXIV.

THE THEORY OF EPISCOPACY.—II.

FEB. 17, 1851.

"NICHOLAS, by the Divine Mercy, of the Holy Roman Church Cardinal, by the title of St. Pudentiana, Archbishop of Westminster, and Administrator Apostolic of the diocese of Southwark"—such is the style and title assumed by Dr. Wiseman. Monstrous and intolerable presumption! exclaims Lord John Russell—to call himself by such a string of names, when there is "Victoria, by the grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith." Monstrous and intolerable presumption! echo a multitude of voices—and none of them more loud than that of "John Bird, by Divine Permission Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of All England, and Metropolitan." In the meanwhile some sceptical people, standing quietly by, and not looking to Lord John for their faith or their practice, may compare the two styles, and say that, after all, as far as they go, the latter title seems to give the go-by to the Queen of England as completely as the former. "John Bird," they will observe, claims to be Primate of All England, not by the permission of Her Most Gracious Majesty, nor by the infinite condescension of that Minister to whom in fact he owes his place, but by Divine Permission, and by that alone. "Yes," as I shall be answered, "but it is by the Queen's permission, and by the permission of Lord John Russell too," that the Archbishop of Canterbury is where he is. But I look to the mode of his election, and I find that the chapter of Canterbury has professed to elect him; and I find also—I am really sorry to have to draw this fact into my statement—that they have professed to do so under special guidance of the Holy Spirit. We all know what a *congé d'elire* is supposed, popularly, to mean; and the more accurate comprehend that the sting is not contained in the *congé*, but in the accompanying Letter Missive, in which her Majesty says—"For certain considerations us at this present moving, we of our princely disposition and zeal being desirous to prefer unto the same see a person meet thereunto, and considering the virtue, learning, wisdom, gravity, and other good gifts wherewith our trusty and well-beloved" ("Renn Dickson Hampden" is the name occurring in the book from which I copy this) "is endued, we have been pleased to name and recommend him unto you, by these presents, to be elected and chosen into the

said bishoprick." Accordingly the bishop is elected, and he then governs his see by "Divine Providence." The Archbishop of Canterbury, as I have shown, is by Divine Permission.

Such, sir, is the attitude of the Archbishop of Canterbury; and such is the attitude of all those Bishops, successors of the apostles, whose *congé d'elire* was Divine, whose letter-missive was the mission to them to go and teach all nations. Either they have been appointed to their sees by a form as cumbrous as it is ridiculous, if not indecent, and any assumption of spiritual power on their part, any claim to govern any district is an aggression both insolent and insidious—or else they have their own appropriate functions which Lord John Russell has not given, which Lord John Russell cannot take away, and which will continue to exist after Lord John Russell is forgotten, till the end of the world.

I do not call upon a Churchman of the complexion of Lord John Russell, who considers habitual attendance upon Dr. Cumming consistent with his allegiance to the Church of England, to believe this. But I do call upon the bishops to be true to themselves. Whatever they may be by natural predisposition, they are, by consecration, Bishops in the Church of God, and as such we honour and obey them in all things lawful, whoever it may be who has prompted the letter-missive which has led to their election. They may feel all the indignation possible at the recent aggression—they may repudiate it with the utmost warmth—they may burn to demonstrate that neither the See of Canterbury nor that which any one of them may fill is extinct; but they must have a care, lest, in opposing a Roman Catholic and an intrusive episcopate, they altogether sacrifice episcopacy, in its Catholic, and in its national character. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London may justly exclaim against Cardinal Wiseman's presuming to govern Middlesex in the double capacity of metropolitan and of diocesan; but let them accept without reserve the terms in which Lord John Russell denounced that power of the Cardinal of Santa Pudenziana, as inconsistent with his allegiance to Queen Victoria, and they will stultify at once and for ever, as far as they are personally concerned, those titles and those claims upon which they fill the thrones of Canterbury and St. Paul's Cathedrals.

One line of defence only they could adopt to justify such a policy, but I will not for one instant suppose they would deign to adopt it. They may say that the retention of all

those forms of election and of confirmation is only a mummery; they may say that they are only State officials; they may openly proclaim that they do not consider that the existing machinery by which a priest is converted into a bishop is a compromise whereby, while the Sovereign exercises the practical nomination, the old rights of the Christian Church, and the old genuine credentials of her bishops, are in form, and as a protest, retained. They may glory in being called to their post by the same authority which nominates Assistant Poor Law Commissioners. They may, I say, do this; and they *must* do this, if they agree with Lord John Russell. But they *cannot* do so; they cannot deny the primary constitution of the Universal Church. Therefore they must take their own, their independent line of opposition, to the new hierarchy; a line of opposition which shall not drive them into suicide as the only method of extinguishing their rivals.

As I have said before, a protest, such as that which *one* bishop made—a protest of Fathers in God, and not of Peers of Parliament—is a portion of this opposition; but it is not all, nor the most important feature of it.

It is self-evident that the strength of the one body will very mainly consist in the weakness of the other. I have already made it clear that various modifications will be requisite before the Anglican Episcopate of the present day can rightly claim to be to the ninteenth century what that of primitive times was to its era. In the early Church, as I showed, the bishoprics were very small, and the bishop was the immediate pastor of his whole flock. He lived in the midst of them; he was always officiating in his cathedral—preaching, visiting, confirming, living with his clergy and taking counsel with them—he fully realised the meaning of his title; in deed as well as in name, he was the *superintendent*. And while superintendent he had a more endearing title: he was a father, too; not governing by edicts and reprimands alone, but by exhortation, by persuasion, by personal labours of rectification. I have shown how the growth of the parochial system introduced a new and most important element into the Christian polity, which might have been combined with that older one which regarded each diocese as a single parish; and I have pointed out how, unhappily, worldly position and temporal advantages were suffered to mar the goodly constitution of older times. Unhappily, the English episcopate of the present day has not emancipated itself from these pernicious influences. One instance which I cursorily alluded to I must

dilate upon—the divorce of the bishop from his cathedral church. These divorces, where they existed, were consolidated by our ecclesiastical reformers of 1835; and in one or two instances, where they did not yet exist, they were pronounced. I cannot, sir, find words strong enough to express how fatal to the true idea of episcopacy I conceive this innovation to be. A bishop living away from his cathedral, even with the best intentions, the highest abilities, and the utmost activity, never can fully shadow forth the true character of his office. Fancy a sovereign never holding his court. Such is the bishop who does not frequent his own especial church. Such a bishop runs daily risk of falling into two extremes—either of sinking into the easy-going squire or red-tape precisionist, or of becoming the autocrat, irresponsible of public opinion, and neglectful of constitutional forms, dealing out self-made law from a comfortable fire-side.

The size of our dioceses is another evil of pressing importance, but this I reserve for fuller discussion in a further communication.

The moral condition of our cathedral churches, even when the bishop is not a non-resident, is very far removed indeed from what the study of primitive times would lead us to wish that they were. Magnificent as they are in architectural form and decoration, it is, we all must feel, too often a magnificence of sense alone. Often must we, in sorrow of heart, think that we would gladly exchange even these glorious forms for the smaller, ruder structures of an earlier day, if we would ensure the men and the system which gave those structures life.

In which of our cities has the cathedral laid hold of the hearts of the people? Where do we find its corporation devoting themselves to the evangelization of that cluster of houses which seems to cling to the huge Minster for support and direction? Where do we behold in it the centre of educational enterprise, and the retreat of theological study? In which city do we find the entire structure, Sunday after Sunday, crowded by multitudes eager to hear their Bishop leading them along the narrow way? In which city do we find it lighted up for the evening lecture upon the week-day? The cathedral stands in awful beauty, the daily service is sung mostly with decent precision, and some congregation is never wanting. But still the building, and all about it, is alien to everything else—a show, and something to talk about at spare times, and something that brings a few strangers to the city; and here its influence ends.

I have spoken naked truths, for it is no time to be mealy-mouthed. We must be real just now. Either we must submit to the Cardinal, or we must oppose him on his own chosen battle-fields—the *slums* of our cities. Either he is strong there, or the terrors of the aggression are a mere panic after all. Our Bishops have shown a zeal which is very remarkable in guarding their flocks against it—so I am sure they will gladly have it pointed out to them at what points they must make the bulwarks of our reformed faith stronger. And yet one is almost ashamed of bringing forward secondary motives as inducements to them to labour to reform abuses so patent as those which I have been recording; still, if secondary considerations will avail at all to effect such desirable ameliorations, I gladly welcome them.

What care our operative classes about the "Seal of the Fisherman," or the Flaminian Gate? If the Roman Catholic Hierarchy is ever to be acclimated to our Birmingham or our Nottingham, it must be from some other causes. These causes will be—and here is my great apprehension of the aggression—that, concurrently with the creation of the titles, the apparatus of working episcopacy has been provided, or rather has been made ready beforehand. It is a notorious fact that several of the new Prelates will find themselves masters of ready-made cathedrals—not churches like the gigantic miracles of Durham or Lincoln, but spacious and handsome buildings, with majesty enough about them not to render their claim ridiculous, even to the architectural critic—planted in the slums of large towns, with their chapters of working clergy already in harness. Accordingly the people of Birmingham and Nottingham will see "the cathedral;" they will hear of "the cathedral;" they will hear *at* "the cathedral;" they will see the new Bishop too, and hear him if they like—a man in grave apparel, living in the heart of their city, always in the church, preaching very often, using his own feet to move about, the daily companion of his associate clergy. They will inquire where is *our* Bishop?—where is the real pastor of that large town which the Romanist has so impudently invaded? And they are directed to Castle this, or House that, some twenty or thirty miles off, with, perhaps, a distant hope that, at visitation or confirmation, six months hence, the Episcopal chariot will be seen to roll through their streets from the station to the church, and from the church to the parsonage, and an elegant *déjeûné*.

These are facts which speak for themselves. No one wishes so heartily as I do, that our Bishops may govern, and

may "continue to govern," our counties and our towns; but paper government goes for very little in any denomination! I know nothing of the interior of the Roman Hierarchy. It may, after all, from its internal unsoundness, be an utter failure. A failure it must be, if the new Hierarchy is not on familiar terms with its inferior clergy. We have heard it rumoured that there were hitches with the Vicars Apostolic; and of course the mere change of name would not heal them. But there also seems a probability—and I have now come to what is, in my mind, the chief danger to the Church of England from the aggression—that the change is to include a restoration of diocesan episcopacy in deed as well as in name; that is, that the clergy are to have a voice in the appointment of their chief pastor, instead of receiving one always from Rome. It is this that our Bishops and our Chapters will have to guard against. How, is a question I leave to them to settle; observing only, that throwing themselves into the power of the Minister, or courting Parliament, is not the way. It is not either politic, generous, or Christian to strive to deprive the members of another denomination, by external interference, of spiritual privileges, simply because one cannot acquire them for oneself; and we may also be pretty well certain that, in the present complexion of the times, every scourge which may be provided against the Roman Catholics will be balanced by a scorpion to chastise the Church of England with. It is not really the "mummeries of superstition" which Lord John resists in the Roman Church—but he dreads its combined energy and power. A similar dread of the Church of England has awakened in him similar feelings so strongly that he is unable to exercise the ordinary caution of not expressing them, even to his own detriment. Stifling the aggressive organization, then, is not the Churchman's way of meeting it. He must fairly overcome it by offering something better in lieu of it. But where should he go for the means of so doing? Parliament—we have the testimony of Mr. Cobden for it—is not a good arena for theological discussion. A Synod we have not yet got; but still there are things which require neither Parliament nor Synod to bring about. To infuse life into our cathedral institutions, to bring their services and the teaching of those mother churches to bear upon the masses of the people, is not penal by act of Parliament or canon of Convocation.

XXV.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.

FEB. 20, 1851.

THE question of marriage with the sister of a deceased wife is again, for the third successive session, before Parliament, but in a way so unusual, in a form so grotesquely mutilated, that it is difficult to think upon it seriously, or to talk of it without disrespect to those who conduct its management.

I need only very briefly recapitulate the rise, progress, and downfall of this notable measure in the House of Commons. Some years past, certain individuals—some of whom had broken the existing marriage law, and some of whom were anxious to do so—availing themselves of the services of a very able London solicitor, applied (very late in the last session of the Parliament of 1841) for an address for a Royal Commission to consider the question of marriages within the prohibited degrees. The thing was ventilated at the fag end of that wonderful Parliament which preserved its physical existence for a year after its moral extinction; it came on early in the afternoon in a very thin house, and accordingly no one had the presence of mind to divide upon the commission—the knot of members who had gathered to oppose it looking to Sir Robert Inglis, and Sir Robert looking at vacuity when the question was put. The commission accordingly met, and in due time laid on the table of the House its blue book, at the close of the session of 1848; and its prime mover, the Right Honourable the present Recorder of London, accordingly brought in, in the session of 1849, a bill founded upon that blue book. This bill was to legalize marriages with the sister or niece of a deceased wife throughout the United Kingdom; the degrees of brother's widow and brother's wife's daughter, standing as they did in perfect parity of relationship, being omitted—an anomaly for which reasons were given, logical enough I do not pretend to doubt, but which the uninitiated profanely interpreted as culminating in "each for himself." This bill produced a long skirmishing debate, which was protracted through the session. In the course of this discussion the blue book was handled in a way which in no little degree surprised the law-breakers *in esse* or *in voluisse*, who could not conceive how such profane liberties could possibly be taken with so august a document as the report of a Royal Commission; but which, I fancy, in no way at all surprised Mr. Wortley. In particular, Mr. Goulburn, tackling its statistics, demonstrated that, according to

its statements, one widower out of every four who had remarried during the preceding year must have married his wife's sister. So the session ended with the bill still in the House of Commons, and the report, morally, nowhere. The session of 1850 saw a bill, purporting to be a revival of the one of the previous session, and introduced under the same patronage, but (besides some utterly ineffective attempts to save the position of the clergy, by limitations the effect of which would have been continual traps to their conscience) comprising one very surprising omission—that of the wife's niece; thus leaving the bill one which was to legalise the nearer degree, the *quasi* sister by the wife's side—while it prohibited the further one, the *quasi* niece by the *same* side; and while the parallel degrees of *quasi* sister, and *quasi* niece, through the brother, were as before excluded. Such a concession as this was, of course, to any dispassionate person, a confession of *special intention*. Arguments in plenty I know were used to palliate it, but common sense somehow met them with the observation —"If it is not right to marry your wife's sister's daughter, then how can you prove it is right to marry the mother?"

This extraordinary fragment of legislation was, however, with infinite difficulty, fought through the Commons; the huge majority with which, on its first ventilation the year before, the House had received it, dwindling on the third reading to ten, and on the question of whether Scotland should be included, to seven. In the Lords it was soon becalmed.

This year the bill re-appears, but not in the Commons, and comprising a substitution of prohibition, geography being made to take the place of affinity as an element of compromise. By the actual measure before Parliament, the prohibition against marrying the wife's niece is re-inserted, while Scotland is excluded from the operation of the measure, which has exclusive reference to England and Ireland. So now the two bills of 1850 and 1851, being compared together, give the following results:—

1. In 1850 a man *may not* marry his niece-in-law anywhere. In 1851 a man *may* marry his niece-in-law, by the wife's side, everywhere: he *may not* marry his niece-in-law, by the brother's side, anywhere. 2. In 1850 a man *may not* marry his sister-in-law, by the brother's side, anywhere: so in 1851. 3. In 1850 a man *may* marry his sister-in-law by his wife's side in Scotland; in 1851 he *may not* do so. 4. In 1850 a man *may* marry his sister-in-law, by the wife's side, in England and Ireland. So also in 1851.

This is the so-called reform in our legislation which is to

take up a night of the time of the House of Lords on Tuesday next. One is really quite ashamed of having to combat such an absurdity; but this absurdity, unhappily, including grave moral detriment to the community, has to be dealt with seriously. The exclusion of Scotland renders all the allegations upon which it has been sought to prop up the bill simply nugatory. If disconsolate widowers need the connubial affections of their wives' sisters to render these the natural guardians of their children in England, so do they in Scotland likewise. If the wife's sister, becoming the mother of a second family, is sure not to be the *injusta noverca* to her sister's progeny in England, no more is she in Scotland. If the prohibition creates immorality in England, so must it in Scotland. If a minority are sufficient to enforce a repeal of the law in England, then the majority have no right to have their way in Scotland. The exclusion of the brother's widow may be traced to different grounds—and those very little honourable, I fear, to human nature. I do not mean to impute them as *consciously* felt by the promoters of the bill; but upon their existence at the bottom of the affair I should almost venture to stake my knowledge of human motives, such as it may be. It is true that the surface view is that the wife's-sister party, being the stronger and more numerous one, has thrown the other overboard, as a sacrifice, more willing than disinterested, to public opinion. But why is the wife's-sister party (a party professing to fight the cause of the poor, but, per blue book, exclusively composed of the higher and middle orders) the more numerous? My answer is, brothers' widows are, as a rule, not so young a class as wives' sisters—brothers' widows also *are* widows.

The difficulties, legal, testamentary, and genealogical, which would infallibly arise from a different table of prohibited degrees existing in different portions of Great Britain, I leave to be done justice to by the law lords.

A specious plea has been raised in favour of the alteration of the law, on the ground of civil and religious liberty, with about as much success as that which has attended Lord John Russell's attempt to prove his Ecclesiastical Titles Assumption Bill a development of the same principle. It is very obvious that the question either has nothing at all to do with this consideration, or that the brother's widow and the niece-in-law by his side in the United Kingdom, and the wife's sister also and the niece-in-law by the wife's side in Scotland, ought to be allowed the benefit of the Act. But, in truth, how does the prohibition impede liberty? That there is some degree

at which liberty of marriage *must* stop is clear to every well-ordered mind, while it is unfortunately a truth that there is no degree which unbridled excess has not at some time overleaped. It is also clear that the wants of the body politic require that the political line should be drawn uniformly, if merely for the preservation of the succession of property. It is also clear that the political line should have a due regard to unquestionable morality, but should at the same time not impose burdensome restrictions. These premises being granted, I appeal to any one to say whether the English law, which freely allows the marriage of first cousins, is too restricted. As for the difference which it is sought to establish between consanguinity and affinity, I leave this, not to revelation, but to nature and to properly-regulated affection, to answer.

So much for the prohibition being a restraint to civil liberty. How is it one to religious liberty? Religious liberty means the liberty of freely exercising one's religion; freely worshipping God as one's religion orders; possessing that spiritual organization and government which a man conceives necessary for the maintenance of the discipline and the faith which he holds; being conscious that the members of this organization can freely meet according to constituted forms to deliberate upon and settle the concerns of that denomination which chooses to submit to them. How, then, can the liberty of marrying one's wife's sister come under any of these heads any more than the liberty of marrying one's own sister? Civilized and intellectual nations, the Athenians, for instance, have permitted the latter. But surely it must be a strange definition of religion which should make such an alliance a duty to one's Creator; and it must be a discontented spirit which should endeavour to make out that the limit which the law of the Church and State in this kingdom alike prescribe is not one which gives to all men that utmost latitude of virtuous, and all but unrestricted, choice—a choice only limited by relationship, and no way by pedigree—which any well-ordered man ought to desire, whether to initiate him into domestic felicity or to cheer his widowed solitude; or which any woman (for it is not, as the promoters of the scheme would fain make it, a *man's* question only) should wish to be presented to the impulses of her confiding disposition.

XXVI.

PAPAL AGGRESSION AND THE SCOTCH BISHOPS.

FEB. 22, 1851.

THE results of the Ecclesiastical Titles Assumption Bill are beginning to show themselves in ways little anticipated by many, who omitted to realise their own position before they "went a colonelling" against that common enemy, the Pope.

The shape in which the attack upon us presented itself was that of a phalanx of Bishops landed somehow in England, but not authenticated in the *London Gazette*. Here was clearly something to make a stand about—here was a cry ready to hand; theological—no matter! constitutional—no matter! It was at least a cry requiring only lungs to make it, and ears to suck it in. The cry was, that the Queen had been insulted. Impulsive but unreasoning good feeling was not slow to catch this up, and in an incredibly small space of time the whole controversy was, both to friends and foes, inextricably confused.

The real broad question was that of toleration; not, I mean, whether toleration should exist or not, but whether, as a fact, toleration *did* exist in this kingdom. This was overlooked, and issue was joined on the secondary matter of the titles of the intruding bishops; just as if, supposing toleration to be the existing axiom of the British constitution, there could be any question as to any denomination, not excluded owing to its anti-social nature (such as the Agapemonites), being debarred from that most complete form of organization which it might require for its own weal. In most politicians this was simply a blunder; in unwary Churchmen, it was an almost culpable blindness; in *some* politicians, it was neither blunder nor blindness.

As, in the eyes of the earnest Roman Catholics, the new English Hierarchy was a great opportunity of proclaiming the axiom of Papal supremacy—so, in the eyes of certain politicians at home, it was an equally good opportunity of clenching that denial of any spiritual authority inherently attached to the Church, in its proper aspect, which it is their earnest desire to make good.

Churchmen, both of the clergy and of the laity, were caught by the view so dexterously put before them, and our papers teemed on all sides with addresses, of which the whole pith and marrow was the insult to the Queen.

In vain a few individuals endeavoured to show how suicidal to all indigenous claims of episcopal authority was this ascription of spiritual power to the Crown as the original source of jurisdiction. These protestations were mostly either disregarded or depreciated. But there was a quarter in which they were subjected neither to disregard nor depreciation—that quarter which, as I had occasion in the very first of these letters to show, professed, not so very long since, that there was nothing parallel between the cases of the new Roman Hierarchy and the Episcopacy of our Church in Scotland.

This was very well in November. In February letters had to give place to bills, and declamation had to be succeeded by legislation. That versatile mind which, in its lack of statesmanship, finds so much place for manœuvre, had in the interim calculated its advantage; and the clerical denouncers find themselves gratified by an enactment, realising to the full the pretensions which they have been labouring to set up of Royal jurisdiction over the Episcopate of the Universal Church.

These worthy individuals had, however, found it convenient to forget that, although in England and in Ireland the Reformed Church enjoyed the dignity of being established, in Scotland its position was that of a Dissenting sect, and its bishops were the free appointment of those over whom they had to rule. Here was a clear assertion of the principle of Episcopacy as an ecclesiastical fact. Hitherto, Scotch Episcopacy had been regarded by politicians as a harmless freak—a thing so weak in itself as to be best met by being disregarded. But, weak as it is in numbers, as a corroborative proof of a theory, it has a value totally independent of numbers; and this theory suddenly acquired a political value.

The result of this unforeseen combination is the bill before the House of Commons for the prevention of the assumption of ecclesiastical titles not granted by the Crown—a bill which, while professing to be aimed at the Papal Aggression, and popularly interpreted to have as its ultimate object the annihilation of Cardinal Wiseman and Drs. Ullathorne, Briggs, &c., has in truth a deeper and a more dangerous intent, which it well behoves every earnest and sincere believer in Episcopacy as a Divine institution—that is, every genuine English Churchman—to ponder, and to say whether it is after all *wise* to crush the Roman Hierarchy at such a cost.

This intent, barely concealed in the words of the enactment—and not denied by any advocate of the measure—is

the assertion that the *status* of Bishop, both the name and the thing, is a religious position which the Sovereign, and the Sovereign alone, can confer.

In one word—I am going to say a startling thing, but I mean it to startle, for it is the truth—*the Ecclesiastical Titles Assumption Bill is a formal and overt repudiation of the Universal Church of God, in its divinely ordered constitution, as held by English Churchmen.* It is the enunciation of the principle that Bishops must be either State functionaries or rebellious impostors, according as they are appointed or not by the civil government.

This claim, to push which the Pope, with so unhappy an ingenuity, afforded to the man who above all others was anxious to make it, an opportunity above all others felicitously adapted for the object, appears patent in the provisions of the Bill—cleverly worded so as to apply to the United Kingdom—by which the episcopacy of the Scotch portion of our communion is rendered penal; and this Bill was drawn, I repeat, under the orders of that Prime Minister who, so far from being oblivious of Scotch Episcopacy, played it off when it suited his object to do so, in his letter to the Bishop of Durham.

Mr. John Stuart, with praiseworthy vigilance, asked Lord John Russell this evening, according to the notice he had given, whether any law-officer of the Crown had decided that it was necessary or expedient that penalties and disabilities should be enacted against Scotch Bishops, as a protection against the Papal Aggression. The answer was just what one would expect—an evasion of the question upon a technicality. Mr. Stuart will, I trust, not allow this reply to silence his questions. In the interim it will go forth more expressive in reality than many a professed answer would be.

This is, then, the *external* position of the case. The joint result of Papal daring, of Lord John's diplomacy, of a popular panic indefatigably worked up, and of the incredible short-sightedness of Churchmen, is that, in order to give some show of statesmanship to the measure of repression directed against the Papal aggression, our own brethren of our own communion in Scotland are to be turned back to those dark disgraceful days when the maintenance of that form of discipline, the denial of which was then penal in England, was in Scotland a grave and punishable offence. The *internal* meaning of the portent is, I believe, still more dangerous and intolerable—no other, I must again repeat it, than to effect what we know Lord John Russell has ever longed to

effect, and what he knew he was helping to effect when he sent Dr. Hampden to Hereford, and Dr. Lee to Manchester, and conferred the deanery of Bristol on his connection, Dr. Elliott—the annihilation of the idea of Apostolic authority in the Established Church.

In one sense the wrong of Scotland is our gain, for it has drawn to light this inward meaning. In opposing the Bill upon the ground of its injury to Scotland, the most timorous Churchman may feel confident that he is not giving Cardinal Wiseman an undue advantage, while he is most assuredly acting towards the Church of England like a loyal and a courageous son. I have no doubt that, now the plot has burst, Churchmen will deal with the measure as it deserves.

XXVII.

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM AND THE MUMMERIES OF SUPERSTITION.

FEB. 25, 1851.

Finis coronat opus. Friday next may proclaim that Lord John Russell has succeeded in glossing over incompatibilities, or it may announce that he has failed; but, one way or the other, we have at last reached the sere and yellow leaf of that chief Minister, who has, above all ministers, shown himself little in the greatest times, crooked when honesty would have been most triumphant, spiteful when he had nothing to complain about, vacillating when the danger was of his own creation. This Minister has foundered on the open seas, as no one but himself could have foundered—bankrupt at last in his own especial speculations, when he had exhausted his credit in every other branch of political business. The two last parliamentary nights of the Russell Government of 1846—two short nights, upon the first of which the House of Commons was up at nine o'clock, and on the second at six—were a conclusion so exactly appropriate to the political life of Lord John Russell, that had Defoe been living to forecast his last days, he never could have matched the actual event. It was a farewell to power, grotesquely grand at once and pitifully ridiculous. As little could the most Pantagruelian annalist have dared last week to build up, even in burlesque, an explanation of a Russell resigna-

tion as for the next Monday, which could have come within half a continent's breadth of the reality of this evening's achievement—an explanation containing no reference, direct or indirect, to the Papal Aggression and its consequences, and no opinion on any Budget, past, present, or future. Brief as was the speech, in its pretended frankness, its real suppressions, its thorough callousness to moral rectitude, it betrayed its author with a fidelity of which, at such a time, one would have hardly supposed even him to be capable.

I am not bold enough to say that we may not still have to endure, for a few weeks or perhaps for some months, the spectacle of Lord John Russell in the leading place on the Ministerial bench, as one of the shows, along with Gore House and the Great Globe, ancillary to the Exhibition; but, morally, his reign is over: and whether he meant his resignation of Friday to be *bonâ fide* or only a *ruse*, the people of England will be obstinate to affix their, and not his, sense to that always dangerous step in Ministers, as well as servants, giving warning.

Twenty years ago, a clever young lord—the historian of Europe after the peace of Utrecht, the novellist of the Nun of Arrouca—lately risen to be Paymaster of the Forces, found himself, not yet a Cabinet Minister, the mouthpiece of an epocal ministry (thanks to its having a leader in the Commons who could never be very eloquent), on a measure of transcendent moment—the reconstitution of that very body which had to discuss it—the certain political extinction of numbers of those who were handling it. The measure passed, and Lord John Russell and Parliamentary Reform became identified in English history. To be sure, it was not always the same reform, unless finality and progress are identical; but the spots in the sun ought not to be illnaturedly looked for through smoky glasses. Still, creditors were not to be ever put off with promises; and on Thursday last, just twenty years after the Reform Bill, the Minister, now Premier, who had introduced it, was pressed, on the motion of a private member, to promise definitely the new Reform Bill, and to give the date of its introduction, so as to get rid of the inconvenient motion. A few minutes more—the house is cleared, and the parent of the Reform Bill is left with fifty-one members to endorse his promise of its development, and about twice that number to record their mistrust of his assurance. This was trying enough; but it was of course set down for the evening as a surprise, and as such it would have soon sunk into a joke and an anecdote among par-

liamentary quidnuncs. The events of the following day stamped it with a moral.

I will not tire you with what I have so often had occasion to refer to—the letter to the Bishop of Durham, with its panorama of the precipice and the unworthy sons, and the responsive spectacle of "the banks of the river side"—I will not re-open other painful topics on which I have had occasion already to dilate. It is sufficient to state that liabilities, recklessly contracted in haste, had to be compounded for by a puritan reformation in the Church of England, undertaken by Lord John with a mixture of craft and of sincerity—craft as far as it helped to evade the persecutions with the promise of which he had striven to delude country meetings—sincerity so far as he longed from his heart to set his foot more completely than he had done through the trick of the Manchester Bishopric, the realities of his distribution of high patronage, the "unostentatious" policy of the Committee of Council on Education, and the bold immodest violence of the Gorham judgment and rejection of the Bishop of London's Bill, upon any remaining liberty of doctrine or discipline which the English Church might yet possess—and driven on by his novel allies with all the vehemence of intolerant and self-satisfied fanaticism. The lumbering impertinences of the National Club, and the selection of St. Barnabas' Church by the thieves of London as the scene of their exploits for several successive Sundays, swelled the panic and encouraged the Reformers. The purifier of the House of Commons was looked upon to repeat his former triumphs in a sweeping alteration of the Church. A Parliamentary campaign was announced against High Churchmen, as an event of the suddenly "glorious, pious, and immortal" Russell Administration, and the announcement was made good in its extremest days. But what a fulfilment! The attack comprised no demand for a Royal Commission—no recapitulation by my Lord Ashley of well-digested imputations, and of influential names, affixed without much forethought to a specious document. It turned out to be a stray shot, inopportunely fired off by a metropolitan member, in the interest of a few constituents, against a quiet, unoffending clergyman, of so flimsy a nature that two or three facts, briefly stated by a friend of the inculpated man, disposed of it completely. This shot was yet the explosion of the mine. It brought up upon his legs that noble lord whom the House of Commons fancied, while it listened to him, was the chief adviser of the Crown. It wrung from him the statements that nothing could be done

in Parliament, and that the Primate of All England did not think of going to Parliament except in the acknowledged contingency of requiring to crush the Rubric, and not being able otherwise to do so. It elicited from the universal good sense of the house the unmistakeable expression of feeling that it ought not to, and that it would not, meddle with such matters. Sir Robert Inglis, amid loud cheers, gave this sentiment substance and expression. Mr. Hume, coming to the assistance of the Lydian party, could only arrive at a charge as frivolous as the former, against another clergyman who was brother to a Cabinet Minister; and with the interval of a hearty laugh at Lord Dudley Stuart, the members, who had been sitting on pins during the whole discussion waiting for that Budget which was never to arrive, found themselves hurrying out of the house, their heads full of anything but the weal or woe of the Church.

And so, amid horrible grinning mockeries of his early and his later glories, after a division on Parliamentary Reform, and a discussion on Church amendment—such a division and such a discussion!—Lord John Russell determined his dictatorship—

"In this Jerusalem must Harry die."

He may now—or if his evil star prevail, after a brief *post mortem* tenure of power, impotent for harm, so long as *he* wields it in his own interest—retire to his ease with the perfect consciousness that he has not only made a more trifling use of magnificent opportunities than any other man could have had the distorted cleverness to do; but that he has directed his enormous power towards more petty teazing and tormenting of unoffending individuals than any other ruler of our millions has thought it creditable in modern times to condescend to.

Churchmen, once they shall be fairly rid of Lord John Russell, will undoubtedly be free from one great and immediate evil; but if they imagine that the ship will be, therefore, in calm waters, they must be terribly deluded. What may yet be in store from any quarter I dare not vaticinate; but they will do well to take a lesson, not to be forgotten, from the conduct of Lord John Russell towards them, and from the way in which many of them were at first inclined to meet the recent panic, to have a little more forethought, a little more organization, and rather wider views in store against another similar emergency.

XXVIII.

LORD STANLEY AND MR. GLADSTONE.

FEB. 26, 1851.

THE anticipations which clouded my letter of yesterday, lest for a short time longer, to his own dishonour and the continued alarm of all thinking people, Lord John Russell should still continue to encumber that place of power which he could no longer maintain with honour, administer with efficiency, or —when the last stroke of the clock had sounded—quit with respectability, have happily come to an end.* In name, as in deed, Lord John Russell is a tradition of the old days. The feeling with which, as a Churchman, one tries to compass this astounding fact, is as yet a dull amazement—a relief too startling and too sudden to be a joy—the first startling into the consciousness of real life from a feverish dream of horrors, more fearful because we could not shape them to our wandering imagination. The dreary anticipation of attacks, now insidious, now menacing and audacious, upon the faith—the slow sapping which we knew was going on around us—the steady, scientific discouragement of everything great and true —all this is gone in a moment with that man who seemed, so little time since, omnipotent for mischief—*afflavit Deus, et dissipantur*.

What may be the precise posture of Church matters under any administration which may ultimately shape itself, it is impossible to conjecture. Certain it is that the Church must be a gainer; certain it is that neither Lord Stanley, nor any other chief Minister, could ever, or would ever, throw himself into that attitude of wanton pugnacity against feelings and facts, which it pleased the late Premier to assume.

Report—more, I believe, from its universality, than a mere rumour—says that this day's chief delay has arisen from Lord Stanley's waiting to confer with a stateman, *bene meritus*, more than any other politician, of the English Church. This report carries with it the assurance of good to the cause of Church freedom in two ways—not merely as it regards the prospects of our seeing Mr. Gladstone again in office, but as

* So every one thought, when this letter was written. I have not, therefore, altered a word of it; for it would be uncharitable to Lord John Russell not to show that at that time he was judged according to common rules.

an earnest of what the intentions and the actions of Lord Stanley must be should he gain the assistance of such a coadjutor.

Considering Mr. Gladstone's antecedents—considering the frankness and the accompanying self-sacrifice with which he made his public acknowledgment that the theories of his book were not possible under the actual state of society—it would be an insult to him to conclude that he would take office with Lord Stanley, or any other chief Minister, except upon an understanding which would enable him to fulfil at once, and by the same means, his duty as a Minister to the State, and as a man to the Church, by advocating that only true, consistent, and rational religious liberty which allows to all denominations liberty of self-development within the bounds of order and morality—to Dissenters and not only to Dissenters, but to the Church of England—a liberty neither abated, in the one instance, from a hypocritical regard to "the interests of the Establishment," nor arrogantly refused in the other on the ground of freedom and the *status* of an Establishment not being compatible.

Such, I say, *must* be Mr. Gladstone's only position in any Cabinet. Such I am desirous of believing is what Lord Stanley imagines are also his own views. The question remains, has he realised the necessary points with a sufficient clearness to make it sure that he could satisfactorily co-operate with one so well informed and accurate on Church matters as Mr. Gladstone?

The last and the most complete *exposé* of Lord Stanley's views upon the question of Church organisation is to be found in that speech which he made on the 4th of this month, on the first day of the session, when the contingency of his being in the act of making a Cabinet within three weeks was not, I conclude, very seriously anticipated. The portion of this speech having reference to the unfortunate Papal aggression is very long. One extract, however, will be sufficient for my present purpose:—

> "If you disallow the title of Bishop of Nottingham, but enable the Bishop of Nottingham and other bishops to complete their synodical organisation, and through that means to exercise boundless control over the consciences of their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, I tell you you have done nothing towards meeting the emergency."

You observe the trenchant character of the proposition laid down in this sentence—that nothing could meet the Papal aggression but the paralysis of synodical action among

Roman Catholics. I do not suppose Lord Stanley implied, when he said this, that he was the foe of synodical action in the Church of England; and he certainly could have no intention of ever attempting to put down the Wesleyan Conference, or the General Assembly of the Established or the Free Kirk in Scotland. The three latter bodies, to be sure, possess their synodical action in working order. The Church of England, as we are too well aware, does not. But the question is not now, what is? but what can, and what shall be? Lord Stanley is, I am sure, a statesmen of too enlightened a mind—too much a man of his century—either to hope or to expect that he can any longer really benefit the Church of England through temporal advantages heaped upon her by Parliamentary favour. He is, we must hope and trust, from his anxiety to co-operate with Mr. Gladstone, truly anxious to see the Church of England righted. But how will he be able adequately to carry out his intention to that extent which Churchmen are longing for all around, if he adhere to the words of his denunciation of synodical action on the part of a tolerated denomination; and how, on the other hand, can Mr. Gladstone accept this doctrine?

The solution is on all sides full of perplexity, and—to Churchmen—of apprehension. But of the two persons on whose mutual understanding such weighty interests depend, Lord Stanley is the one who can more easily, and with more honour, open the way to an accommodation. So, if Lord Stanley and Mr. Gladstone are combined in the same Cabinet, it must be the earnest wish and hope—I ought rather to say, the fervent prayer—of every Churchman, that this union may be the pledge of Lord Stanley's free acceptance of the truly tolerant, yet truly Church-like views of his colleague, rather than of Mr. Gladstone's closing with the sentences, more eloquent and fervid than elaborately thought out, of his lordship.

XXIX.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL, LOW CHURCHMEN, AND THE BISHOPS.

FEB. 27, 1851.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL really out, one can review with more of calmness than heretofore the relative positions into

which he, with the party which has so recently and so suddenly made him their hero, and likewise the bishops, have found themselves driven, under the various antagonistic pressures which they have alternately courted and impinged upon. The *denouement*, as you will see, finds them all assuming false and untenable attitudes.

The Durham manifesto purchased the ex-Premier a champion where he had never expected to find a word of comfort —that bi-weekly paper which is the organ of the more uncompromising members of the Low Church party. This journal, which had long maintained a traditionary conservatism, has for some little time past extended a forgiveness, if not generous, yet very comprehensive, to Lord John Russell, and has constituted itself mourner at his exequies. What has made it do all this? Lord John's zeal for what he calls Protestantism. If Lord John Russell's apprehension of this phrase, and that of the journal in question, were identical, there would be nothing wonderful in this, and nothing discreditable to any party. But the truth must out, and the sooner and the more plainly it is told the better. In their new-born zeal for Lord John Russell, in their professed admiration for his Durham letter, the Evangelical party must very well know that they have been bridging over differences the most enormous with a most assured confidence. That Durham Letter, renowned as it is, was not his first specimen of epistolary theology—it was not the first outburst of his Protestantism. Events have been crowding so fast, that it is almost now forgotten that several brilliant specimens of his authorship found themselves in print a little more than three years ago, at the time of the nomination of Dr. Hampden to the see of Hereford. One of these I venture to reproduce, not for its suavity—nor yet for the dignity which runs throughout it—not for the logical connection of its argument, or the wide spirit of charity which dictates its inferences—but as a proof of the real nature and value of that zeal for pure religion on the part of the ex-dictator which has of late won him so much applause from the organs and the speakers of a certain party:—

"Chesham-place, Dec. 10, 1847.

"My Lords and Gentlemen,—I have had the honour to receive your representation on the subject of my recommendation of Dr. Hampden to the Queen for the see of Hereford.

"I am aware that there exists a strong feeling on the part of some laymen and clergymen against Dr. Hampden; but that the appointment should excite feelings of bitterness is, I hope, an error, as it would show

a sad want of Christian charity on the part of those who would indulge such feelings.

"The consequences with which I am threatened I am prepared to encounter, as *I believe the appointment will tend to strengthen the Protestant character of our Church*, so seriously threatened of late by many defections to the Church of Rome.

"Among the chief of these defections are to be found the leading promoters of the movement against Dr. Hampden, eleven years ago, in the University of Oxford.

"I had hoped the conduct of Dr. Hampden, as Regius Professor of Divinity and head of a theological board at Oxford, had effaced the memory of that unworthy proceeding.

"I have the honour to be, my lords and gentlemen,

"Your obedient servant,

"J. RUSSELL.

"To certain lay members of the Church of England."

The words which I have italicised are very important. Lord John excused his thrusting Dr. Hampden on an unwilling Church, against the reclamations of respectable men of all parties in it, on a plea that this act of his would tend to strengthen its Protestant character. What he implied by this phrase he did not then explain, nor has he ever since explained. It is therefore fair to conclude, that when he used the word "Protestant" in that latter, and when he used it in his later one, he meant to express the same thing.

Wide as are my differences from Lord Ashley and his party, and inadequate as I believe are their ideas of the doctrine either of the Church of England or the Universal Christian Church, or of the means necessary to keep doctrine alive in the world, yet I am ready cheerfully to own that they are at least anxious for a fixed and definite faith, such as they fancy their Protestantism to be. How far did the appointment of Dr. Hampden conduce to strengthen *this* "Protestant character of our Church?"

Dr. Hampden's Protestantism is of a widely different class —a class referring not to Baxter or to Calvin, but to his intimate friend and adviser, the inspiring element of his lectures —to Blanco White, and all that dreary shoreless sea of scepticism on which that unhappy man had turned his bark adrift. So palpable was this fact that, both on the former occasion of his appointment to the Divinity chair at Oxford, and on his elevation to the see of Hereford, many of the most respectable members of the Evangelical party, as it is termed, were among the most earnest of his opponents.

Need I enter into further explanation—need I dilate more at length upon the unprincipled nature of the alliance which, commencing from the Hampden epoch, acquired strength and

solidity last autumn, between the Latitudinarian party, the coterie of Blanco White, of Dr. Hampden, and of Lord John Russell, and the Evangelicals, as they are termed—the party whose Parliamentary leader Lord Ashley is—a coalition between the negation of all dogmas, and a dogma, incomplete to others, but meant by its professors to meet the requirements of definite revelation?

Supposing the immediate result of this combination justified, and the "large party" expelled, would there have been peace, and harmony, and concord in the Church of England? If so, it would have been a peace of pure selfishness, a harmony of corruption, and a concord of no belief whatever!

But this was not the only false position petrified into an historical blunder by that downfall of Lord John Russell. The palpable result of that combination was an attack not upon doctrine, in the first instance, but upon ritual. Do not be afraid of my wearying you with a recapitulation of all the Bennett affair. I will not even repeat how Sir Benjamin Hall and Lord John Russell brought another clergyman, Mr. Murray, before the House of Commons, for the offence of carrying out the Rubric according to his conscience, as the culminating exploit of a deceasing Cabinet.

In the speech then made by Lord John, which history will record as his last official announcement, his lordship took occasion to state that the bishops had been consulting upon the rubrical question. Report says that a result of this consultation may be expected in the shape of some joint publication of the Bench.

In the interim your columns of this morning contain an opinion—and that an opinion of eminent and learned men, Dr. Addams and Mr. Badeley—that, in nearly all the points on which Mr. Bennett was brought in question, and all those charged against Mr. Murray, the incumbent did nothing more than obey the laws of that Church which he could not disobey without committing a grave offence.

Pray note the strange predicament. Mr. Bennett divested of his living—Mr. Murray rebuked; and both, by no ordinary and contemptible authority, pronounced in the right!

What paper may be issued by the Episcopal conclave, I know not—it may, of course, take the same view as this opinion, although I confess I do not much expect that it will do so. If it does not, are its authors—many of them bishops of Russell nomination—sanguine enough to anticipate that in the present temper of matters, those Churchmen whom

they most desire to affect will accept their extra-legal dicta in the face of such an opinion?

I trust we have heard the last of so unfortunate a contrivance as this publication would infallibly turn out, to kindle strife where harmony may now exist, to subject honest men to the torment of a divided conscience, and to compel them to make questions, now in solution, matters of principle, and to fight for them as such, without the hope of an accommodation.

The fear of the Ministry driving on the Bench to acts of intolerance being now removed, such considerations as those I have just stated must prevail. Our bishops must desire to return to that *status in quo* which last autumn disturbed, and to escape, with all possible and decorous haste, from their present attitude of preparation for a fierce intestine war in which they would be the assailants.

Thus, sir—to return to the point from which I started—the Russell revel ended, all parties but the "large party" of High Churchmen find themselves in their wrong place, with wrong allies, and aiming after impossible results. The "large party" itself was at first adopting some erroneous policy, but it corrected itself just at the right time.

Churchmen will have enough to make them fearful for the future; but one form of the perpetual danger which they are ever incurring has been averted—one part of the history of the English Church has been played out: the first scene at the Flaminian Gate; the second in the Bishop of Durham's study; the rest—no matter where; at last the epilogue, when the chief performer, who began roaring and bouncing and mawling like a lion, confessed his real name and vocation:—

> "When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar,
> Then know that I, one Snug the joiner am,
> No lion fell, nor else no lion's dam."

END OF FIRST SERIES.

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